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NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW.

No. XC,

JANUARY, 1836.

ART. I. — *Means of ascertaining the Genuineness and Integrity of Ancient Writings.*

1. *A History of the Transmission of Ancient Books to Modern Times; or a Concise Account of the Means by which the Genuineness and Authenticity of Ancient Historical Works are ascertained; with an Estimate of the Comparative Value of the Evidence usually adduced in support of the Claims of the Jewish and Christian Scriptures.* By ISAAC TAYLOR. 8vo. London. 1827.
2. *The Process of Historical Proof Exemplified and Explained; with Observations on the Peculiar Points of the Christian Evidence.* By ISAAC TAYLOR. 8vo, London. 1828.

WE have placed the titles of these books at the head of this article, not with the intention of entering into any minute analysis of the respective works to which they belong, but for the purpose of recommending them to our readers, and as introductory to an inquiry, we propose to institute, into a particular branch of the "Process of Historical Proof."

The former of these works, namely that relating to the "Transmission of Ancient Books," is the most succinct and comprehensive statement of the subject in the English language, with which we are acquainted. It makes no pretension,

as the author himself says, "to communicate information to those who are already conversant with matters of antiquity, literary or historical, and whatever might seem recondite, or whatever is still involved in controversy, has been avoided. Nor has the author loaded his pages with numerous references, which, though easily amassed, would have increased the size of the volume without being serviceable to the class of readers for whom he writes." The only work in English, to be named in comparison with this treatise, is that of Mr. Astle.* And this, though very elaborate and trustworthy, and superbly embellished with *fac-similes* of ancient manuscripts, and in all respects, a learned and valuable work, is yet too minute in its details to be of general interest, and too expensive to be within the reach of the great mass of scholars in this country.

The design of the latter of these books, Mr. Taylor states, as follows: — "After exemplifying, in a signal instance, the ordinary process of historical proof, I have endeavored to suggest hints for analyzing, with fairness and freedom, the Christian Records, viewing them merely as the materials of history." And "instead of taxing the attention of the reader, by placing before him a set of abstract principles of evidence, or of distracting his attention by adducing a multiplicity of instances, he proposes to select a single instance, and to exhibit, link by link, the entire chain of proof by means of which the *absolute certainty* of events alleged to have taken place nearly five hundred years before the birth of Christ, may be satisfactorily established. He selects the history of Herodotus, and the principal events of the Persian war, as affording fair samples of this species of reasoning, in the two departments of literary and historical proof."

This design, we think, is carried forward to a very successful issue. The genuineness of the work of Herodotus is satisfactorily established, and the argument from the genuineness to the authenticity of the history very well put. But the parts of the treatise which strike us as particularly valuable, are the chapters on the "Use of Ethical Writings as the Materials of

* The Origin and Progress of Writing, as well Hieroglyphic as Elementary, Illustrated by Engravings taken from Marbles, Manuscripts and Charters, ancient and modern; also some account of the Origin and Progress of Printing. Second edition, with additions. By Thomas Astle, Esq., F. R. S., F. A. S.; and Keeper of the Records in the town of London. 4to. London. 1803.

History ;” the application of the argument in proof of the “Authenticity of the Apostolical Epistles ;” and the “Hints towards an analysis of the Christian Evidences.” This last chapter alone contains *stock* enough of elementary thoughts, to furnish a large number of those, too often, dull and innutritive books, which are continually inflicted on the Christian public, under the title of Evidences of Christianity.

In general the statements are clearly made, and the arguments arranged in lucid and logical order. There is, however, we must say, a tendency in some instances, which we need not stop to particularize, to over-statement, and to an assumption of the tone and bearing of an advocate, which are unwise and out of place, and only serve, with a careful thinker, to invalidate the strength of the author’s positions. And the style too, and with this remark we leave the unwelcome task of excepting to the great and prevailing value of the works, is often too elaborate, ornate, rhetorical and intensive for our taste, and particularly so, in a subject of cool and dispassionate inquiry. The strength of all arguments, in such cases, lies in the facts, and the more simply these are stated, and the more they are left to tell their own stories, the better.

The specific design to which we now propose to address ourselves does not allow us to indulge in any further remarks on these volumes. And we dismiss them with a grateful acknowledgment of the interest and instruction we have derived from their perusal, and with an earnest recommendation of them to all who wish to see the subjects, of which they profess to treat, learnedly and ably discussed.

That branch of the “process of historical proof,” on which we now proceed to offer some remarks, is the method of ascertaining the Genuineness and Integrity of writings purporting to be ancient.

Many of the facts and arguments involved in this inquiry are, of course, adverted to, in all research pertaining to the age and authenticity of classical manuscripts, charters, records, and similar monuments of antiquity ; and are particularly brought into view, in all attempts to authenticate the claims of the sacred Scriptures. But within the last three hundred years,* the subject has assumed the form of a distinct science,

* Father Mabillon in his epistolary dedication to Colbert of the first edition of his great work “*De Re Diplomatica*,” (fol. Paris, 1681,) says of the

under the name of *Diplomatics*, or the *Diplomatic Science*, and has called to its aid, particularly on the continent of Europe, a vast amount of laborious and learned investigation. It is an inquiry, it must be confessed, not very inviting in its first aspect, but will be found, nevertheless, to connect itself, in its results, with very interesting topics of illustration.

But whatever may be thought of the interest of the inquiry, it is one of inherent and manifest importance. The comprehensive language of Mr. Taylor on this point is strictly true, — “that the credit of literature, the certainty of history, and the truth of religion are all involved” in the discussion before us. And it has, as Mr. Astle justly observes, a direct “influence on politics, morality, literature, canon and civil law, and even on divinity itself. The divine and lawyer labor to little purpose, unless they can show that the testimonies which they adduce, are accompanied by all the necessary marks of authenticity. For if the rules of criticism adopted by learned antiquarians were arbitrary, and the epochas established by them false, ancient writings would be of as little authority as fictions; and were it impossible to ascertain the dates or ages of documents, all their labors would be idle and fruitless, and their productions really be, what ignorance has often asserted them to be, nothing better than the works of mere sportive fancy.” None, it may be supposed, at this day, will adopt the very strange, though ingeniously supported, theory of the French Jesuit Hardouin,† that all the remains of the Greek and Roman writers, with the exception of the works of Cicero, Pliny’s Natural History, Virgil’s Georgics, and the Satires and Epistles of Horace, were forged and imposed upon the world by some Italian monks of the thirteenth century. Yet the remark is probably true, that, “from a want of acquaintance with the facts and principles on which a rational conviction of

science, that before his time, “tamen jacebat illa inculta sine regulis, sine legibus, præter eas a quas pro suo quisque captu ac genio confingebat. And Father Montfaucon, in his splendid *Palæographia Græca* (fol. Paris, 1708,) observes of the subject matter of his book, — “Certi rem utilitate non minus, quam ipsa novitate jucunditateque acceptam fore.”

† John Hardouin, born at Quimper in Bretagne, 1646 or 7. The work referred to in the text, is his *Chronologiæ ex nummis antiquis restitutæ Prologus de Nummis Herodiadum*. Among other strange things, he asserts that Horace and Virgil are two allegorical writers, who under the names of Lalage and Æneas, have shadowed forth Christianity, and the life of its author. He publicly recanted his errors, and afterwards repeated them in other forms. He died at Paris, 1729.

the Genuineness and Integrity of ancient writings is to be founded, many persons, otherwise well informed, feel that they have hardly an alternative between a simple acceptance, or an equally indiscriminate suspicion of the whole."

Nor is the inquiry as abstruse and difficult as is often apprehended. It is true, that when carried into minute details, it involves much recondite and various learning. But the general facts and principles, which are connected with the transmission of ancient literature to modern times, apart from any controverted application of them to particular writings, are easily understood and appreciated. They are the same in kind as we are conversant with, and constantly recognise and act upon, in every-day life. Now, it is these general facts and principles which are admitted by all inquirers, and which are not embarrassed by controversies, and considered as separate from all minute criticism, or specific applications, that we shall proceed to lay before our readers. And this we shall attempt to do in the plainest and simplest manner possible. We are not ambitious of that cheap parade of learning which is furnished by numerous quotations and references, and take leave to say, on this point, once for all, that we shall avail ourselves of all the resources within our reach, and, in an especial manner, of the first named book of Mr. Taylor, without any particular acknowledgment, unless some circumstance may seem to render such an acknowledgment expedient. Any show of learning that we may be, or may seem, to be guilty of, we shall refer to the foot notes, that the most plain and "way-faring" of our readers need not stumble thereat.

We have one further preliminary remark to make, before entering upon the subject. We advert to a distinction, the neglect of which has always involved the discussion before us, in perplexity and confusion. The inquiry we propose to pursue is concerning the *genuineness* of ancient records; not concerning their *authenticity*. These two subjects are entirely distinct in their nature, and are to be determined by entirely different modes of proof. Writings are said to be *genuine*, when it can be satisfactorily established that they were written by the *persons*, and of course, at the *time* assigned, and that they have *not undergone any material change* in the course of transmission to us. Writings, on the other hand, are said to be *authentic*, when they can be shown to be trust-worthy in regard to the facts they state. Evidence in support of the former

proposition will prove that the writings in question are not *forged*, either in the whole or in part ; and evidence in support of the latter proposition will show that they are not *falsehoods* or *fictions*. It is plain, moreover, that these propositions *may* be entirely independent of each other. Thus, it may be ascertained that a certain writing or record was written by the person whose name it bears, but, at the same time, it may be conclusively shown that he is not entitled to the least credibility in his statements. It may be proved that he is overcredulous, or that he is a romancer or a falsifier. And again, it may be established that a writing or record contains a credible statement of facts, though, at the same time, it may be proved, that it could not have been written by its alleged author, or even at the time alleged. Thus, for example, an ancient book called the Cyopædia, is attributed, on satisfactory evidence, to a certain Greek who lived at Athens, about four centuries before the Christian Era ; but it will be admitted, probably, that it is entitled to little more credit, as a record of facts, than one of the Waverley novels. Its *genuineness* is well enough established ; its *authenticity* is not. So too, we can have no doubt, that a book, now familiarly known, entitled Telemachus, was written by a certain author, named Fenelon, an Archbishop of Cambray, and in the seventeenth century, but no one believes that the events therein described, really took place. It is a *genuine*, but not an *authentic* production. And on the other hand, a book may have come down to us from a former age, which from independent sources of proof, we may be satisfied contains an accurate statement of certain facts or events, but whose author is unknown. This would be an *authentic*, but not a *genuine* production.

We have said that these questions are not *necessarily* connected with each other. There may be instances, however, in which the admission of *genuineness* involves also the admission of *authenticity*. If, for example, there be found in ancient writings, of an *epistolary* character, admitted to be *genuine*, certain allusions to facts, as familiarly known both to the writer and his correspondents, and these too, of a character that do not admit the supposition of mistake or artifice ; these allusions are to be taken as a sufficient proof of the reality of the facts, and this, for the plain reason, that they cannot be accounted for on any other supposition. Thus, if the *genuineness* of the

Apostolic Epistles be admitted, it must also be admitted that the writers had the power of working miracles, and of enabling others to do so, since they refer to these as facts well known and admitted by both parties, and it is inconceivable that they should have thus written, if the facts did not exist. This point is very well illustrated and enforced in chapter sixth of the "Process of Historical Proof," by Mr. Taylor, and applied afterwards in chapter thirteenth, with peculiar and irresistible power to the alleged "gift of tongues."*

Now, as we have already observed, it is to the question of *genuineness* of ancient writings, that our remarks will be confined. And our precise object is to furnish as satisfactory a reply as our resources and limits may permit, to the following inquiry, namely; — What are the facts and arguments by which it is determined, that books and writings purporting to be ancient, were really written by the authors to whom they are severally attributed, and in consequence in the age assigned, and that they have not suffered material corruption, in the course of their subsequent transmission to our times?

The remains of ancient literature exist in two distinct forms, that of printed books, and that of manuscripts. Our reply in answer to the question we have now stated, will have reference to this fact.

And let it be supposed, in the first place, that we knew nothing of the manner in which the literary remains of antiquity have been transmitted to us, but that they existed now only in the form of printed books, and there were not such a thing as an ancient manuscript in existence, what proof should we then possess of the *Genuineness* and *Antiquity* of these writings? We answer, proof of a very satisfactory character. And it is that which is furnished by internal evidence alone, that is, evidence found in the writings themselves. And this is of several kinds.

1. That a work, purporting to be ancient, exists, furnishes a presumptive argument of some force, that it is what it professes to be; since, whatever we may think of the alleged depravity of the human race, a regard for the truth, and a tendency to believe in the trust-worthiness of others, are instinctive principles of our natures. Hence, if a writing exists, claiming to be the work of a former age, this fact alone, is to be taken

* See also Marsh's *Michælis Int. &c.*, Vol. I. Chap. ii. Sec. 1.

as we have said, as presumptive evidence in its favor, sufficiently strong to throw the burden of proof upon him who calls its genuineness in question. This presumption is strengthened by the concurrence of any of the following circumstances ; and, in the same degree, as they are united in support of the genuineness of any book, the evidence becomes more and more conclusive, until it rises to moral certainty.

2. There may not be discoverable in the work any motive for perpetrating a forgery, or of perpetuating a deception.

3. There may be obvious throughout a document, an expression of honesty, candor, reality and fair-dealing, analogous to the *impressions* we receive from individuals with whom we are personally acquainted in common life, and which are irreconcilable with the supposition that a deception should be systematically attempted in regard to the antiquity or any other claim of the book.

4. Various copies of the same work may exist in various and distant parts of the world, in different versions or translations, and of different dates ; and if the work in question is not one of a didactic or imaginative character, but derives its importance solely from its being a statement of *facts*, and if these facts are of an ancient period which the author declares that he himself had known either personally, or from credible authority ; — then this general adoption and estimation of the book can only be accounted for on the ground that the writer is worthy of credit, and that his writing, in all important respects, is what it purports to be.

5. There may be nothing monstrous or improbable, or all circumstances considered, any thing unlikely to take place, related in the narrative. And if the production be such, as might naturally be expected from the known character, means of information, object, and condition of the reputed author, this would be an additional proof of its genuineness. And this conclusion would be still further strengthened, if what at first seemed incongruous, either in regard to the character and opinions of the writer, should be found, on more thorough examination, to be fitting or necessary to the work in question.

6. A book may exhibit a minute accuracy in its allusions to the existing persons, events, manners, and circumstances of the times in which it purports to have been written. And all this may be so inartificial as to preclude the idea that it is supposititious. And this argument is greatly fortified, if from the na-

ture of the case, these allusions could only have been suggested by a personal knowledge of the facts. Theological scholars know how forcibly this remark is illustrated by the allusions in the Gospel Narratives and Apostolical Epistles, viewed in connexion with the varied and eventful history of Judea at the alleged period, and the utter extinction of the whole Jewish polity, which ensued soon after the destruction of Jerusalem and its temple. This criterion, it is true, like many of the rest, is more directly applicable to the authenticity of the history, than to the genuineness of any particular writing or book which contains it. Still, that it is also a strong presumptive proof of the latter, is plain from the fact, that if such allusions were wanting, or if they could be proved to be erroneous, the proof of its spuriousness would be decisive.

7. Documents by various authors, at different times, may be found concurring in the same events, and what is more decisive, not stating these events circumstantially, but implying and proceeding upon them as established and well known facts.

8. The historical succession of events may be supported naturally and consistently. The importance of this rule will be made apparent from considering that if any signal event, or the appearance of any distinguished personage, or the prevalence of any doctrine or controversy, which were known to have taken place in a subsequent period, were antedated or alluded to in the work in question, it would be a decisive proof of its spuriousness. The history of the world is a connected history; and when any important event occurs, it leaves its mark on the age, and not only so, but it is necessarily connected with what precedes and follows it, as well as with the cotemporaneous history of the times.

9. When the friends of the presumed author of a book, and his associates and cotemporaries generally, or those who lived near to his time, do not deny, or do admit it to be his work, it is to be received as an argument in favor of its genuineness, since these are best able, and most interested, to decide upon the subject.

10. It is a confirmation of the same result, if the language and style of the work in question, resemble those which characterise the reputed author in other acknowledged writings of his; since the lines of a man's countenance are scarcely better known, than his prevalent modes of associating and expressing

his thoughts and sentiments. Every body, almost, understands, and applies, this rule of judging continually. This rule, moreover, as will soon be shown, applies to the use of language generally, in any era, as well as to the style of any particular author.

11. But a very decisive criterion of the genuineness of books reputed to be ancient, is that furnished by References and Quotations. This is well stated by Mr. Taylor, whose language we here borrow. "A single reference found in one author to the works of another, who, in his turn, needs the same kind of authentication, may seem to be a fallacious, insufficient and obscure kind of proof; for this reference or quotation may possibly be an interpolation, or the reference may be too slight or indefinite to make it certain that the work now extant is the same as that mentioned. But the validity of this kind of proof arises from its *amount*, its *multifariousness*, and its *incidental character*. For though a single and solitary testimony may be inconclusive, many hundred independent testimonies, all bearing upon the same point, are much more than sufficient to remove reasonable doubt; and if some of these references are slight and indefinite, others are full, particular and complete. If some are formal and direct, and such, therefore, as might be supposed to have been inserted with a fraudulent design, others are altogether circuitous and incidental. If some have descended to us through the same channels, others are derived from sources as far removed as can be imagined from the possibility of collusion. A work may happen to want this kind of evidence, and yet, on other grounds, possess a good claim to genuineness. But, in fact, almost all existing remains of ancient literature are abundantly authenticated by the numerous and explicit [and undesigned] quotations, or descriptions that occur in other works. And there are very few books that do not contain some direct or indirect allusions to other works; so that the remains of ancient literature, taken as a mass, contains within itself the proof of the authenticity [genuineness] of each part." The completeness and force of this species of evidence, can be estimated only from a minute examination of particular examples. And all illustrations of this description, both the nature and limits of this article oblige us to forego. Those who wish to appreciate duly the validity and strength of this kind of proof, are referred, as a familiar

example, to the "Horæ Paulinæ, or the truth of the Scripture History of St. Paul," by Paley; which is not only the most original of all his works, but comprises one of the most decisive arguments, of the kind, in the language.

These Quotations and References, we may, however, briefly observe, are of various kinds. Thus they may be *literal*, whether or not ascribed, expressly, and by name, to their author. From these, two things may be ascertained;—First, the existence of the work quoted, at the time in which the writer who makes the quotation, wrote;—and, Second, the identity, and even the correctness of any extant text, so far as these quotations are concerned.

Again, there may be *incidental* allusions. These may be sufficiently obvious to show that one writer was known to the other, and yet so remote and plainly undesigned, as to preclude all suspicion of interpolation or artifice of any kind. In like manner, there may be coincidences of this description, which plainly shew, either that both writers derived their information from the same common source; or that the one copied from the other. And, in the latter case, if the work of the one bears the plain impress of originality, and is in perfect accordance, in style, manner and spirit, with other acknowledged writings of the author, he is to be taken as the original authority, and the other as the quoting party, thereby establishing the previous existence of the work which is quoted from.

And, again, in point of fact, most authors, now generally admitted to be ancient, whose works are extant, have been *distinctly referred to*, named, criticised, commented upon, and described, by subsequent writers. Lists of their productions, summaries of their contents, biographies of the writers, in which their works are mentioned and classed in the order of time, are to be found; by means of which all the important parts of the original works may be identified and compared with the purported copies of them now extant.

Some ancient Treatises again, contain ample quotations from previous authors, together with a *list of all those, in the order of time*, who wrote on some given subject previously to the age of the author.

And again, *Controversies* of every description afford abundant occasion for quotations, and those, too, which being cited for some express purpose, that has long passed away, are beyond all suspicion of having been interpolated.

13. *Translations*, provided they have been made near to the time assigned as that in which the original author lived, and correspond with the text in question, and have come down to us through means different from those by which the alleged original work has been preserved, afford a conclusive test of genuineness. And if, further, there be several of them in different languages, they render the evidence of Genuineness complete.*

14. There is yet another source of proof, tending to the same result, distinct in itself, yet like the above, derived from internal evidence, or from the writings themselves. This is to be found in the *language* in which the book in question is written. To make this plain, it must be remembered, that "a language is, at once, the most complete, and the least fallible of all historical records." Almost any work of any kind, *in* any language, may be forged, but no man can forge *the* language in which the work is embodied. It bears, and always must bear, the exact "form and pressure" of the times.† "The precise extent of knowledge and civilization to which a people have attained, — nothing more, and nothing less, is marked out in the list of words, of which they have made use. The common objects of nature; the peculiarities of climate; the works of art; the details of domestic life; political institutions; religious opinions and observances; philosophy, poetry and art; every form and hue of the external world; and every modification of thought, find in language their representatives." If we know, therefore, accurately the vocabulary of any language, we are possessed, thereby, of a great mass of facts

* The student on this subject will perceive that hints on this part of our inquiry, have been derived from the following sources. *Johannis Clerici Ars Critica*, Part III. Sec. II. *March's Michaelis*, Part I. Ch. II. *Less, Geschichte der Religion*, pp. 485 — 634. *Larduer's* truly great work contains specimens throughout, of all these different kinds of quotations.

† Father Mabillon thus poetically alludes to this fact, and thus repudiates the rash hand, which (to prevent Priscian's head from being broken) would dare to reduce the language of ancient writings to grammatical rules. "Ut suus unicuique arti idiotismus constat; sic etiam Rei Diplomaticæ inest proprius loquendi modus, qui magis ex usu pendet, quàm ex Grammaticæ regulis. Sunt quos salebrosus ejusmodi stilus offendit, quem dum ad genii sui captum emendare conantur, idem ferè committunt, atque illi, qui in prato floribus sponte nascentibus consperso, decussis agrestibus flosculis, ocellos, tuberosas, aliaque id genus in fictilibus vasis substituerent. Plus enim delectat nativa illa rerum varietas, quàm affectata in loco peregrino elegantia. — *De Re Diplomatica* Lib. Sec. Cap. I. p. 54.

by which to test the genuineness of any work, which is written in that language; and if, in addition to this vocabulary, we are familiar with all the niceties of grammar, construction, idiom, and style, which prevailed in any period of its history, and are able, moreover, to trace the alterations which have taken place in these respects, from age to age, together with the changes that have occurred in the meaning of words and of peculiar modes of expression;—we are furnished with ample means of ascertaining the Genuineness of any work purporting to be ancient. Every age has its peculiarities in all these respects. Language, as such, like every thing else earthly, is in a state of continual change. It has its rise, its progress, and decline. It has, moreover, hues and tones, inversions and affectations, innovations and corruptions, which are peculiar to each successive age of its existence; and thus furnishes, what has been aptly called the “*latent history*” of the people through whose lips it passes.” Horace says very truly,

* * * “*mortalia facta peribunt,
Nedum sermonum stet honos, et gratia vivax.
Multa renascentur, quæ jam cecidère; cadentque
Quæ nunc in honore vocabula, si volet usus,
Quem penès arbitrium est, et jus, et norma loquendi.*”

And he who forges any writing, intending to palm it upon the world, as a production of a previous period, must, in consequence, forge all these minute peculiarities of language belonging to the period, to which he chooses to assign his work. This is obviously impossible. Such attempts always fail. They always must fail. The very efforts which are made to give to a pretended work these minute marks of genuineness, only serve, like all other attempts at deception, to furnish to the skilled and practised observer, new means of detecting the imposition. A memorable, though now almost forgotten, instance of the searching power of this test, is furnished by the controversy respecting the alleged poems of Ossian. The unhappy attempt of the eminently gifted Chatterton, to impose his writings on the world, as the works of certain ancient poets, is another case in point. And the critical accuracy of this same test is remarkably and most successfully manifested in the labors of modern scholars, and particularly in those of Germany, in their inquiries into the genuineness and integrity of the text of the ancient classical writers, and of the scriptures.

Language has, therefore, been well compared to a mirror; which reflects all the communicable ideas of a people who, at any given time, employ it. And as every change in their condition must involve a corresponding change in their language, and as the events and circumstances which produce this change, are often known or ascertainable, these successive changes occurring in an author, may serve to fix the date of his work. Thus, for example, if there should be a dispute a thousand years hence, concerning the genuineness of a book, in the English language, in which were found particular references, or allusions, more or less distinct, to the power of steam in propelling machinery ; or to rail roads ; or to certain systems of political economy ; or to tariffs ; or to mooted maxims of inter-communication between nations ; or to the abolition of slavery in the British West India Islands ; or to the extinction of Poland as a nation, by the overwhelming power of Russia ; or to the fact, that the poor remnant of the natives of North America were removed one step nearer to their final resting place in the Pacific Ocean ; or to magnificent enterprises of missionary, and all kinds of philanthropic societies ; or to associations or lyceums for mutual improvement ; or to the fact that a popular cast is attempted to be given to all science and all literature, so that what was formerly locked up in ponderous folios, and deemed to be wholly inaccessible except to the learned few, is now brought into open day, epitomized, familiarly explained, and sown broad-cast over the land ; — if, we say, allusions or references should be made to circumstances like these, as being of recent, prevalent, or peculiar, interest, in a book whose genuineness shall be disputed a thousand years hence, they would clearly indicate the fact, that it was to be ascribed to the first third of the nineteenth century. And if, moreover, these references should be found to coincide accurately with that degree of information, which, from other and independent sources, is ascertained to exist in regard to each of these subjects, at this particular period of time, it would be an additional fact in confirmation of the same result.

Thus, then, in Internal Evidences alone ; — namely, in sources of proof derived from books themselves, as well as in the nature and progress of language, there exist rich and available materials for ascertaining the genuineness of books, purporting to be ancient, and this too, though there were not an ancient manuscript in existence.

II. But it is well known that manuscripts, believed to be ancient, *do* exist, and in great numbers. We pass, then, in the next place, to consider what facts and arguments there are by which the genuineness of these is to be authenticated.

We commence this division of the subject, with two preliminary remarks. One is, — it is obvious, that if in respect to any work regarded as ancient, an unquestionable *autograph* copy, that is, a copy in the hand-writing of the author can be found, all further question in regard to its genuineness is precluded. But there are few such autographs, even of any modern writer; and none of any ancient one. Yet, as we shall presently attempt to shew, such a near approximation can be made to this degree of certainty, by means of the circumstances attending the original writing, and the preservation and transmission of manuscripts, that the genuineness and antiquity of a work is scarcely less certain, than if the first copy in the hand-writing of the author were still extant.

The other introductory remark is this. It is not necessary to trace the history of manuscripts lower down than to the invention of printing; that is, to the beginning of the fifteenth century, because at that time, or shortly after, most of the Greek and Latin, or what are commonly called classic authors, passed through the press. Their existence at the period that this took place is thereby obvious. And as a printed book cannot be materially altered by the pen, or by any other known mechanical means, without detection, it cannot be successfully interpolated or corrupted. It also bears a *date*, or if it do not, the period of its origin can ordinarily be ascertained by other means. And if, as is the fact with almost all the remains of ancient literature, it were issued in different forms, and in diverse places, any material change of the text, without affording at the same time the means of discovery, would be all but impossible. Thus, for example, a certain work, by *Saint Augustine*, entitled “*de Civitate Dei*,” was printed in Italy, (and the second book printed there, as Dibdin* says), in 1467. It was reprinted at Rome, in 1468, and twice subsequently before the close of the year 1470. Now these different printed editions show conclusively in the first place, the existence of a manuscript of this work in the fifteenth century. And if, further, they should be found

* “Introduction,” &c. Vol. I. p. 224.

to agree *in the main*, but to differ from each other in some small matters of a merely verbal kind, it is to be inferred that they were derived from different manuscripts, and not copied from each other ; and means also are thus afforded of testing the purity and integrity of any extant text of the book. In ascertaining, therefore, the genuineness of this alleged work of Augustine, we need not follow the proof further down than the concluding part of the fifteenth century. And the same reasoning applies in all analogous cases.

The inquiry then before us, is, — What are the means by which the date of manuscripts, anterior to this period, may be ascertained ?

Manuscripts, particularly those of the Hebrews, have been divided into two classes,—namely, *autographs*, or those written by the authors themselves, of which, as we have said, none remain ; and *apographs*, or copies made from the former, by subsequent transcriptions. These apographs again have been divided into the *more ancient*, which were of the highest authority among the Jews, but of which no specimen remains ; and into the *more modern*, which are still extant. These last are again subdivided into the *rolled*, which are used in the synagogues, and into the *square* manuscripts, which are in private use. M. De Rossi has divided this kind of manuscripts into three classes, viz. 1. *More ancient*, or those existing before the twelfth century ; — 2. *Ancient*, or those written in the thirteenth and fourteenth century ; — 3. *More recent*, or those written at the end of the fourteenth, or at the beginning of the fifteenth century. It is not necessary, for any purpose we have at present in view, to recognise these distinctions, and we only state them here as an example of the extreme accuracy with which this subject has been examined. Our remarks will have reference to the methods of authenticating the age of ancient manuscripts generally. These are very various.

1. The history of some manuscripts is accurately known. They were considered, as we shall hereafter see, in former times, as extremely valuable. They were, in consequence, so accurately described by successive scholars, as to leave no doubt of their identity ; and they were mentioned, moreover, in the catalogues of the libraries to which they belonged. And, if in any instance, they were transferred to other persons, the

circumstances of such a transference were authentically recorded.

2. Some* manuscripts are *dated* by the persons who copied them, and if there be no reason to question the genuineness of this date, it is obviously decisive of the period to which they belong.

3. Many manuscripts exhibit *marginal notes*, added evidently by a subsequent writer. The age of these notes may, not unfrequently, be settled by means of some allusions to particular persons or events, or by the form of the letter which is used, or by some other means ; thereby referring the original writing to an earlier period.

4. The age of a manuscript may be indicated by the *material* of which it is composed ; that is, whether it be Soft Leather ; or Parchment ; or Vellum ; or the Papyrus of the Nile ; or the Bombycine, or Cotton Paper ; since all these different materials were used for manuscript writing in succession, and at periods which are well ascertained. It will be useful in estimating the force of the argument drawn from the materials which were thus used for writing, to give a succinct account of them.

But before proceeding to a consideration of this subject, it may serve to give some completeness to the inquiry, to advert, in passing, to that subsidiary aid which is to be derived from those more durable inscriptions, which were made on harder substances. It is obvious, as almost innumerable specimens of writing of this description exist, and belong to every age, even to the very earliest ; and as these, moreover, bear in most cases, some date, or some internal evidence of the period in which they were written, that they furnish examples of the successive changes that have taken place in the forms of letters and modes of writing. And these, being thus authenticated, it is plain, may be used in ascertaining the age of manuscripts, so far as the character of the writing is concerned.

The most ancient remains of writing are those which have

* Authors differ in regard to the numerical proportion of the manuscripts thus dated. Mr. Taylor speaks of such as being "a large proportion." Mr. Horne, on the other hand, says that "by far the greater number of manuscripts have no subscriptions or other criteria [of a like kind,] by which to ascertain their date." Of course, opinions on this point will differ according to the manuscripts consulted.

been transmitted to us on marbles, metals, and precious stones. The Decalogue was written on two tables of stone ; a practice by no means confined to the Jews, but one in use among the Oriental nations, and also by the Greeks and Romans. Had Voltaire not been ignorant of this fact, he would have spared the ridicule, which he has attempted to cast upon that part of the Pentateuch where a command is given to write the law upon stones. The laws of the Greeks were engraven on tables of brass, called *Cyrbes*. The Tables of Isis, yet preserved in the royal collection at Turin, exhibit the practice as employed among the Egyptians. It is said that "more than three thousand tables of brass, kept in the capitol, were destroyed by a fire in the reign of Vespasian."*

Wood was also used for writings or inscriptions, in very early periods of the world. *Table books*, or tables of solid wood, called *Codices*, (whence the term *Codex* for manuscripts written on any material, has passed into common use), were employed chiefly for legal instruments, and a system of laws is called, to this day, a *code*, from this circumstance. These table books were known to the Jews eight hundred years before the Christian era, since Solomon exhorts his son to write his precepts on the tables of his heart.† They were called by the Romans *Pugillares*, and when used for billet-doux, (as was sometimes the case) they were termed *Vitelliani*,‡ — the reasons of which terms are not very evident, while those assigned are sufficiently fanciful. The wood, in the preparation of these tablets, was cut into thin slices finely planed and polished, amounting, in number, from one to five. The writing was at first on the bare wood ; afterwards, as we shall presently see, these tablets of wood were over-spread with wax. Table books of ivory were used by the Romans, and were probably not greatly unlike those still used for memoranda, which are written upon with black-lead pencils. Thin sheets of lead were employed for a similar purpose, in like manner as they are used as marks or tallies, at the present day. These are called by Suetonius (in Nerone, chap 20) *Chartam plumbeam*, — sheet lead. Job perhaps, refers to this practice, (chapter xix. 24,) though a different construction is given to the passage in the admirable translation of that book by Mr. Noyes. "O that they (my words) were graven with an iron pen and lead

* Astle, 198.

† Proverbs, iii. 3. See also Isaiah, xxx. 8.

‡ Martial, Lib. II. Ep. 6.

(or) in the rock forever." Montfaucon (Palæo. Lib. I. 16,) speaks of having seen only one of these leaden books, which consisted of eight leaves, the first and last being used as covers.

But no material employed for books has, perhaps, claims to higher antiquity than *the skin of the calf or goat*. This was so tanned as to be at the same time soft, flexible, and durable; and was usually dyed of a red or yellow color. The skins, thus prepared, were connected together in successive lengths, sometimes extending to more than a hundred feet, and were sufficient to contain an entire book, which formed one roll.* Hence is derived the word *volume* as applied to books in subsequent times. This material appears to have been more frequently used by the Jews and other Oriental people, than by the Europeans. It is evident from Exodus, xxvi. 14, that the Hebrews in the time of Moses, possessed the art of preparing and dying skins; and it is considered not improbable, that the very autograph of the law, by Moses himself, was written on skins of this description. Herodotus says that the Ionians, from the earliest times, wrote upon goat and sheep skins, from which the hair had merely been removed. Diodorus Siculus speaks of the same practice as prevailing among the ancient Persians. Dr. Buchanan took with him, on his return from his learned researches in India, a roll of the Pentateuch,† which he procured from the black Jews of Malabar,

* This is probably the kind of roll referred to in Isaiah, viii. 1; Jeremiah, xxxvi. 2; Ezekiel, ii. 9. And from Ezra, vi. 1, it appears, there was a "house" or library, appropriated to the preservation of these rolls.

† This is the famous *Cambridge Roll*, or *Indian*, or yet more distinctively, the *Malabaric* copy of the Pentateuch. The following facts, which are gathered principally from Mr. Yeates's "Collation" of this manuscript, as condensed by Mr. Horne, may not be without interest, and serve still further to illustrate the nature of this kind of ancient records. It is made of goat skins, and dyed red. It is forty-eight feet in length, and about twenty-two inches, or a Jewish cubit, in breadth. The book of Leviticus, and a great part of the book of Deuteronomy are wanting. It is believed that its original length was not less than ninety English feet. In its present condition it consists of thirty-seven skins,—and contains one hundred and seventeen columns of writing, perfectly clear and legible, and exhibits a beautiful and valuable specimen of the manner and form of the most ancient Hebrew manuscripts among the Jews. The columns are a palm of four inches in breadth, and contain from forty to fifty lines each, have no vowel points, and are written in all other respects according to the very rigid rules prescribed to the Jewish scribes or copyists. We may add, that there is much difference of opinion among the learned, concerning the value of this and other Indian manuscripts. Dr. Kennicott anxiously desired to procure a copy, or a collation, of one of them, for his edition of the Hebrew Bible,

who, there is strong reason, (as it is thought by some who have investigated the subject,) for believing, are a part of the remains of the first dispersion of that nation by Nebuchadnezzar.*

Parchment, an article well known at the present day, as used for permanent records, is mentioned by the earliest Greek historians, as a material which had been employed, from time immemorial, for books and writings. It was called by the Romans, *Pergamena*, because its manufacture was improved and carried on to a great extent at Pergamus, a city of Mysia, and particularly in the time of Eumenes, B. C. 200. He is said to have encouraged and perfected the art of preparing it, in consequence of the exportation of the papyrus from Egypt being prohibited, through the jealousy of one of the Ptolemean kings. The term *membrana* was also applied by the Romans to parchment.† The greater part of all manu-

but that privilege was not vouchsafed to him. Quoting from Wolfius, he says that a certain Jew, named Moses Pereyna declared, that some Jews, about eighty in number, flying from the persecution by Titus, passed through Persia to the Malabar coast, where they arrived in safety. Unde constat, says Wolfius, Mstis Malabaricis multum fidei tribuendum esse. Bishop Marsh, too, considers this particular Malabaric manuscript, and others which are derived from the same source, as extremely interesting and valuable, since, though equally taken from the autograph of Moses, as those of the west of Europe, yet they must have descended to these black Jews in the interior of India, by a different channel. Professor Bauer, on the other hand, maintains that these manuscripts are of little importance. For notwithstanding the long residence of the Jews in China, lasting through many centuries, they have no manuscripts older than those of the fifteenth century.

It is a singular fact, illustrative of the prevalence of this method of writing on the skins of animals, that it prevailed amongst a people, so distant from those last mentioned, as the Mexicans. Cortes sent over to his royal master, Charles V. a Mexican writing, in figurative or hieroglyphic characters, whose meaning is, at the present day, wholly unintelligible to the inhabitants of the country whence it came. The material on which they were drawn, is buck-skin, or doe-skin, covered with a sort of plaster or whitening. Soe Noehden's, "Short Account of the Library at Vienna." Class. Journal. Vol. 23.

* Father Mabillon, on the authority of previous writers, unknown to us, whom he quotes, says that the skins of fishes and the intestines of serpents were sometimes used as materials for writing. And in confirmation of this, quotes a marvellous story of some manuscripts destroyed by fire at Constantinople, — "quos inter erat etiam Draconis intestinum, pedes cxx. longum, cui Homeri pœmata, Ilias et Ulyssea, aureis litteris fuerant inscripta, cum historiâ rerum ab Heroibus gestarum;" and adds with delightful simplicity, "et id piscinis illis membranis sane auctoritatem conciliat." *De Re Diplomatica*. — Lib. I. Cap. VIII. p. 312.

† Thus Horace; (Ser. Lib. II. Sat. III.)

"Sic raro scribis, ut toto non quater anno
Membranam poscas."

And Quinctilian, while recommending waxen tablets as being preferable

scripts that are of higher antiquity than the sixth century are on parchment,* or the more delicate material, of the same kind, called vellum. That which was very thin was always preferred; and it was usual with the ancients to stain the parchment or paper, on which fine manuscripts, and the instruments of sovereign princes were written, with purple, dark blue, violet, or other colors. They were sometimes tinged with an oil, expressed from cedar-wood, to preserve them from corruption, and were also made into rolls, and adorned with titles in red ink.† Parch-

in the efforts of original composition, on account of the ease with which erasures and emendations could be made upon them, refers to *parchment* as being best for those whose eyes are weak. This, he says, however, is objectionable as checking the force and flow of thought, in consequence of the necessity of frequently stopping to dip the reeds in ink. "Quæ (i. e. membræ) ut juvant aciem, ita crebrâ relatione, quoad intinguntur calami morantur manum, et cogitationis impetum frangunt." Inst. Orator. Lib. X. 3. Ed. Spal. Those are over-wise who neglect such little things, on the ground that they are little. With due deference, we recommend to all persons, who have that highest and hardest of all tasks to go through, namely, original composition, heedfully to mind what Quintillian says on the subject, and we will take leave to fortify our opinion on this point, by the authority of Goethe. "In this mood," says he, that is, when the fit of inspiration was on, "I much preferred the pencil, (a manifest improvement on the waxed tables of the ancients) which gave out its marks more rapidly; for it sometimes happened that the scraping and squirting of the pen awoke me from my night-walking poetizings, distracted me, and stifled a little production in the birth." Goethe's *Nachgelassene Werke*. Band, VI. xv. We have taken this very literal translation from the Foreign Quarterly Review of this work.

* The most ancient as well as the most accurate manuscript extant of any part of the Greek version of the O. T. is the Codex Cottonianus, written on vellum, in uncial letters. It has been thought to have been written as early as the commencement of the fifth century. It was brought from Philippi, by two Greek bishops, and presented by them to King Henry VIII. It was given by Queen Elizabeth to Sir John Fortescue, her preceptor in Greek. It was placed by him in the Cottonian Library. Hence its name. Another Codex Cottonianus, preserved in the same library, is one of the oldest, if not the oldest, manuscript of any part of the N. T. which is known. It has been referred to the same period as the former. It is written in silver letters on a faded purple ground. The reader who is desirous of seeing a succinct account of these and other manuscripts of the Scriptures, which are held in estimation, is referred to Mr. Horne. Introduction, Vol. II. Part I.

† All these latter circumstances are referred to in a passage of Ovid.

"Nec te (liber) purpureo vaccinia succo:
Non est conveniens luctibus ille color.
Nec titulus minio, nec cedro charta notetur;
Candida nec nigra cornua fronte geras."

Ovid. de Tristibus, Eleg. ad. librum.

Horace also refers to this anointing of manuscripts with an oil expressed from the cedar tree, as a mark of distinction, in the familiar passage,

"———— Speramus carmina fingi
Posse linenda cedro." Ars. Poet. v. 331.

ment has proved to be a substance of great durability. And we may here observe, that there seems to be a kind care of Providence, in thus directing men to commit the most valuable records, and those which, on account of their antiquity, it was most difficult to preserve, to the most durable materials.

Leaves of Trees have been used as a material for writing in most nations, and in the remotest times. The leaves of the Mallow or the Palm were most frequently employed for this purpose, and were often wrought together to extend the surface. The allusion of Virgil* to the Sibyl's leaves, renders it plain that the use of them for writing was well known to the Romans. Juvenal has a reference to the same practice. Diodorus Siculus mentions that the Judges of Syracuse wrote the names of the persons, whom they sent into banishment, upon the leaves of the olive tree. The practice of writing on the leaves of the palm tree is yet prevalent among different eastern nations. It is probable however that this very slight and inconvenient material was confined to the transient purposes of business, social intercourse, or the instruction of the young.

The inner *bark of trees*, and particularly of the Linden, or Teil tree, has been used for writing, in various quarters of the globe, and still serves for this purpose in several parts of Asia. It was so generally used both by the Greeks and Romans, in this manner, that its name became a common term for a book† in both languages; and hence also is derived our term Book, and also Bible.

But no material or preparation appears to have been so frequently employed, particularly by the Greeks and Roman as *Tablets of Wood covered with a thin coat of colored wax*. This was an improvement on the simple wooden tables above referred to. On account of the facility with which erasures

Pliny says that the books of Numa, were preserved by an essence, called *cedrium*, derived from the cedar tree, though they had lain five hundred years under ground. This story of Pliny is, probably, fabulous enough, yet it serves to show the antiquity of the usage. Cedar chests or boxes were also used by the Romans, as the most safe and durable depositories for manuscripts.

* *Insanam vatem aspicias, quæ rupe sub imâ
Fata canit, folisque notas et nomina mandat.*

Æneid, l. iii. v. 444.

† Liber. Βίβλος.

and alterations could be made in the labors of original composition,* these Table books were continued long after the use of the Papyrus became common. The writing was effected by means of an instrument called a *Style*, † which was a brass or iron needle, or pencil, flattened at one end, for the purpose of making erasures.‡ This is the origin of our word *Style*, which has, in course of time, been so variously used, that the original meaning of the term is lost in the highly metaphorical, changeable and fantastic significations it has assumed. Some of these Table books were large, and doubtless somewhat heavy, since Plautus represents a boy, seven years old, as engaged in the no very dutiful task of breaking his master's head with one of them. The style, too, was rendered sometimes a very dangerous instrument. Cassianus, a Christian schoolmaster, is said to have been killed by his scholars, armed with these styles, on account of his heresy on religious points. It is also related that Cæsar, when attacked by the conspirators, used his iron style, as a dagger, and thereby inflicted a wound on the arm of Cassius.§ And angry advocates in the public courts, having, on several occasions, made a more fatal use of their styles, than that of pointing their sarcasm, or driving home their invective, the use of iron for the instrument was prohibited, and ivory, bone and wood were substituted.¶

* The reader of the Latin Classics will recognise continual allusions to these waxen Tablets. Thus, for example, "*mandare aliquid ceris*," (in the quotation from Quinctilian above,) *to commit to writing*. "*Ceras implere capaces*," (Juv. Sat. I.) *to crowd the ample pages*. "*Cærite cerâ digni*," (Hor. Lib. I. Ep. 6.) *Deserving to be disfranchised as citizens*. "*Prima, secunda cera*," *the first and second page*. "*Ima, extrema cera*," *the bottom of the page*. And as epistles written on these waxen Tablets, were usually tied together with thread, the seal being placed on the knot, the phrase "*Linum incidere*," *to break open a letter*, was very common.

† Γραφεῖον. Lat. Graphium. Hence also Γραφίον, — a case for styles.

‡ Hence the phrase, common among the Romans, "*vertere stylum*," — *to blot out*.

§ Suet. in Cæs. c. 82. "*Cassii brachium graphio trajecit*."

¶ We may here observe that when softer materials than wood or stone were written upon, other materials were used as instruments of writing, such as Reeds and Canes, sticks of the Bamboo, and Pencils made of Hair. These latter, were used for the large Capital Letters, with which manuscripts were begun, and subsequently by the illuminators. Quills of Geese, Swans, and other birds, have been put in requisition, probably since the middle of the seventh century. St. Isidore, of Seville, who lived at that time, describing the instruments used for writing, thus solemnly describes the nib of a pen, — "*penna avis, cujus acumen dividitur in duo*."

The *Papyrus* of Egypt, or Egyptian Reed, or the Paper rush, was, during many ages, the material most in use for writing. The consumption of this article was so great, as to form a principal branch of commerce in the Mediterranean, during many ages. From this is derived our familiar term *paper*. It was called *charta* by the Romans, and this is probably the origin of the English word *charter*.

The *Papyrus*, of which the material for writing was made, abounds in marshy places in Egypt, where the Nile overflows and stagnates. It grows like a large bull-rush from fibrous reedy roots, and runs up in several triangular stalks, sometimes to the height of ten cubits.* These stalks are somewhat tapering, and are about a foot and a half in circumference at the thickest part. They have large tufted heads, which being unfit for making paper, the stem only was used for this purpose. Pellicles, or thin coats, being flaked from the stalk, were laid, two or more of them, over each other transversely, and were glued together either with the muddy and glutinous water of the Nile, or with a fine paste made of wheat flour. After being pressed and dried, they were made smooth with a roller, or by a solid glass hemisphere, or by heating with a mallet.† This texture was cut into various sizes, from four fingers' breadth, to that of two feet, and of proportionate length.

* This account is condensed from that of the *Papyrus*, given by Mr. Astle, who, in turn, derived his, principally from Pliny, L. XIII, C. 2. It differs, in some respects, from a description of the plant by Mr. Taylor. But, perhaps the most elaborate account of the *Papyrus*, is that of M. le Comte De Caylus, published in L' Acad. Roy. des Inscriptions, Vol. XXVI. He derives, however, the greater part of his facts, confessedly, (see page 268,) from Melchior Guillardin, an eminent physician and botanist, of Königsberg, in Prussia. Guillardin is also often quoted by Father Mabillon, "*De re Diplomaticâ*," and particularly in Lib. I. C. 8.

† Those of our readers who have seen the beautiful paper invented and manufactured, by a very ingenious lady, of a neighboring town, from the bark of the *Asclepias Syriaca*, or common *Milk Weed*, will have better ideas of the paper made of the Egyptian *Papyrus*, than can be attained by any description of ours.

This *papyrus*, is one of those natural productions, which seems to be singularly adapted, in Providence, to supply most of the necessary wants of the people among whom it is indigenous. In addition to the use above mentioned, the Egyptians made cups and other utensils from the lower and harder part; the upper ones were converted into staves, or ribs of boats; the sweet pith was a common article of food; the fibrous part of the stem was made into cloth, sails for ships, ropes, strings, shoes, baskets, wicks for lamps, &c.

We subjoin Pliny's account of the manufacture of the *Papyrus*, with the corrected text and translation of Caylus, above referred to. "Texuntur omnes tabulæ madente Nili aquâ; turbidus liquor vim glutinis præbet in

The largest and best was called *Imperial*; the second sort was called by the Romans *Livian*, from the wife of Augustus, and was twelve inches in width. The third kind was called *Sacerdotal* paper, and was eleven inches in size.

According to Varro, the practice of writing on this material was first introduced into Egypt in the time of Alexander the Great. Pliny, however, maintains, that it was used by the Egyptians three centuries earlier. In the seventh century, the Papyrus was superseded by Parchment, but was not entirely disused until the twelfth century. Very few manuscripts of this material are found of later date than the eighth or ninth century, and an instrument of any kind, written on this paper, and dated in the thirteenth century, may safely be deemed a forgery. There is no evidence that it was ever used for manuscripts in England or in Germany.

The Chinese, from very early times, have made a paper from the bark of a tree called *Ku-Chi*. It does not appear to have been used for manuscripts intended to be long preserved, and we may thereby pass it over with this brief reference.

The *Charta Bombycina*, or cotton paper, often improperly called *Silk** paper was, it is generally conceded, an Eastern invention, and manufactured as early, certainly, as the ninth century, and possibly much earlier; and in the tenth† it was commonly used throughout Europe. This invention was afterwards rendered more available for general purposes, by the substitution of old linen or cotton rags for the raw material, by which means the price of the article was reduced, and its quality improved. This is the paper now in use, and it surpasses all other materials for writing, both in respect to ease and convenience.

re, cum primò supinæ tabulæ scheda adlinitur, longitudine *Papyri* quæ potuit esse, resegminibus utrimque amputatis; transversa posita crates peragit, premitur deinde prælis. Tous les papiers sont tissus sur une table par le moyen de l' eau du Nil, dont on les humecte; ce liquide troublé ou limoneux fournit en effet une bonne colle; on forme d' abord sur la table horizontale une feuille de la longueur de la tige du *Papyrus*, autant que les rognures faites de part et d'autre ont pu le permettre, cete feuille est croisée par une autre posée transversalement, ensuite on la met à la presse." Dissertation above referred to by M. le Comte de Caylus. — pp. 305, 306.

* *Silk*, according to Du Halde, cannot be beat into such a pulp, or paste, as to make paper.

† Mr. Astle says, after Montfaucon, that it was not in general use, until the beginning of the thirteenth century, and that a *Latin* Charter or Record on cotton paper, of the tenth century, would be suspected, though a *Greek* one, of that age, may be genuine.

From this account of the materials which have been successively employed for writing, from the earliest age until the present, it will obviously appear, that the changes which have thus taken place, especially when reviewed in connexion with other evidence, will serve to indicate the age of manuscripts, or, at least, to furnish an important means of detecting fabricated documents, since the different ages of the world, at which these different materials came into use, and continued in use, may be satisfactorily ascertained. As, for example, no one acquainted with the subject, would give the least credence to a purported original, or very ancient, manuscript of the Mosaic Law, which was written on parchment; or one derived from a writing on the leaves or bark of trees, or on tables of wood without or with wax, or on the papyrus; for the plain reason, that all these materials for writing, were invented and used in ages remotely subsequent to the period, when the Mosaic Law was promulgated.

A similar argument is derived from the history of the various *Inks*,* or the substance used for the formation of letters. Much detail on this part of the inquiry may be dispensed with. The Cuttle-fish (*Sepia*) is said to have originally furnished the ancients with Ink. But this is problematical. Soot of lamps, coal of ivory, various preparations of mercury and of silver, gold, stones, pyrites, gums, woods, and juice of plants, and of almost every color and hue, were used for inks. There were also Encaustic methods of writing, or those done by the agency of fire. There was a purple ink, solely appropriated to the use of the emperors, and called the sacred encaustic. This was afterwards closely imitated, as appears from the subscription sometimes found at the end of Greek manuscripts, comprising the name of the transcriber, with the year, month, day, indiction and sometimes the hour, when the copy was finished. There is a copy of the four Evangelists extant, that is written

* We have, for the most part, followed on this and the following topic, namely, the forms of letters, the account of Mr. Astle, as being very carefully prepared. That of Father Mabillon is much more superficial and sketchy. *De Re Dip. Lib. I. cap. X.* Those who wish to see this whole subject learnedly and thoroughly treated, in all its parts, are referred to the splendid work of Father Montfaucon, entitled "*Palæographia Græca*;" fol. Par. 1708. It is confined, however, as the title imports, principally to the usages of the Greeks, in respect to the methods of writing. We shall occasionally make use of this, as we proceed, as we have done already, without a more particular reference.

upon purple parchment, in letters of gold throughout. It will be seen by this, that the composition now in use for ink, contains little or nothing in common with that which was used by the ancients. It is also true, that we have none equal, in beauty, color or durability, to theirs. This will readily be seen, by comparing any documents, such as wills or records, or other important instruments, which have come down to us, written between the fifteenth and seventeenth century, with those which were the production of the preceding centuries up to the fifth. But what is most important to be noted here is, that those who are accustomed to examine ancient manuscripts, acquire a certain erudite tact, or practical skill, in judging of their age, from the composition, color, and condition of the ink. This, of course, cannot be explained to others. But it is asserted, by those qualified to judge, that it is perhaps more practicable to give to a picture, than to a manuscript, the hue of antiquity, by artificial means.

On similar grounds, again, a knowledge of the *successive changes in the ancient shapes and forms of letters*, as they were introduced by caprice, accident, or convenience, affords an almost certain means of determining the age of manuscripts. An exact uniformity in the forms of even printed letters, or in the general appearance of the printed page, hardly is preserved, even for so long a period as the third of a century. And this is particularly the case in regard to a language that is widely diffused. The style of printing which prevailed soon after the art was carried to that high degree of excellence, to which it very early attained, is well known to book collectors. And the changes which have taken place, from time to time, in this respect, are also known or ascertainable. But in regard to ancient manuscripts, these changes are incomparably more obvious; and by means of ancient inscriptions on marbles, coins, brazen tables and other durable materials, a sufficiently definite idea of the forms of letters, and of the general character of writing prevailing in each century, from the second to the fifteenth, may be obtained. The argument from this source is exceedingly strong, but it can only be fully appreciated from an examination of fac-similes, which cannot, of course, be exhibited here. Those curious on this subject, and who have not access to originals, are referred to the works, above cited, of Mabillon and Montfaucon, and to that of Mr. Astle, which will leave little to be desired so far as the general

argument is concerned. In Mr. Horne's Introduction, (English copy), there are also some sufficiently well executed examples of the manuscripts of the Greek and Hebrew Scriptures. From these, and other sources at hand, we shall give as succinct an account as possible of this part of the subject.

All ancient modes of writing may be divided into three kinds ; *capitals*, *uncials*, and *small letters*. All ancient inscriptions on marbles, brass, and other hard materials, belong to the first, though writing in capitals was not confined to these ; manuscript books to the second ; and to the third, charters, grants, and other instruments belonging to matters of business. Small letters were rarely used, in manuscript books, before the middle of the fourth century. They were adopted in certain instances before the eighth century. In the ninth, they became much more common, and, in the tenth, entirely superseded the previous forms.

The most ancient manuscripts were written in Capitals. These were in general use for records and important documents from the earliest periods known to us, to the middle of the fifth century. Smaller characters, indeed, were occasionally used for subjects of little importance that required despatch. Capitals have been divided into *square* letters, which are found interspersed among several ancient monumental inscriptions, and are very common on seals until the eleventh and twelfth centuries ; the *round*, which were preferred to the former in the thirteenth century ; the *sharp*, which consist of oblique and angular lines ; the *cubical*, which are very long, and have been sometimes used as initial letters ; and the *rustic*, which were bold, careless, and unequal. These last were preserved, with less alteration than took place in other forms, until the tenth or eleventh century.

Uncials are large rounded letters, and, in this way, are distinguished from the capitals just mentioned. The term is supposed to be a corruption, on the part of ignorant monks and schoolmen, of the term initial. This character was first used about the middle of the fifth century, and generally prevailed from the close of the sixth to the middle of the eighth. If a manuscript is entirely in uncials, it is supposed to be of earlier date than the close of the ninth century. And a manuscript in uncials, *without any ornaments*, is deemed to have been of good antiquity. Demi-uncials were characters somewhat approximating to the *small letters*. These were used in

Europe in the sixth, seventh and eighth centuries, but discontinued in the ninth.

The manner of writing called by the Greeks Boustrophedon,* that is, backwards and forwards, as the ox ploughs, is very ancient, and of this there are two kinds, the older beginning from right to left, and the more recent from left to right. The Boustrophedon writing is thought to have fallen into disuse, about the fifth century before Christ.

The most ancient Greek manuscripts extant, are written *without division of words, spirits, or any marks of punctuation*. The insertion of Accents is attributed by Wetstein† to Euthalius, an Egyptian bishop, or deacon, A. D. 458. In this he is followed by Michaelis. The Colon and Comma were added by Jerome to the Latin version of the Scriptures, a century earlier. The Note of Interrogation [;] was first used in the ninth century. The blank spaces between the words, and the division into chapters and verses are of no authority. The iota subscriptum is suspicious, and all the accents are spurious. The catch-word, as it is called, or the repetition of the first word of the following page at the end of the preceding, belongs to the twelfth or the following centuries. These are important facts for the student of the Scriptures to know, since if these marks were not used by the Apostles, then as Michaelis justly observes, “no manuscripts and no printed edition will oblige us to receive them; they will be considered as explanations of the ancients, from which we may depart.” And again, “the best rule for determining the proper place of a point or stop in the New Testament, is to follow the most approved exegetical rules in explaining each passage.” At the invention of printing, the editors placed the points arbitrarily, and Stephens, in particular, varied his points in every edition. And as to the division of verses, these have no higher authority than that of Robert Stephens, A. D. 1551. They were made by him, as his son mentions, while on a journey (*inter equitandum*) from Lyons to Paris. The biblical student well knows that false constructions have been given to many passages, from a neglect or ignorance of this fact.‡

* Βεστροφεδιόν.

† See Wetstein's Prol. N. T. p. 2. Astle, pp. 60 — 85. Butler's Horæ, Bib. pp. 83, 84. Taylor's Hist. Transm. p. 58.

‡ Marsh's Mich. Int. N. T. Vol. II. Chap. XIII. The whole of this chapter, together with the notes appended by the editor, is particularly worthy of the student's attention.

To the demi-uncials, succeeded the *Roman* small letters, which were employed, with many changes, until the invention of printing. They resemble the small characters which our printers call Roman. They were occasionally used before the subversion of the Roman Empire, in affairs of business, where despatch was needed. They were afterwards adopted by most European nations, under different forms, and in successive changes. So early as the ninth century, small letters were generally used.

The reader who is curious in these matters, is referred to Mr. Astle's book, chapter fifth, for an account of the various alphabets, which, like the Roman, are supposed to be derived from the Greeks, such as the Gaulish, ancient Gothic, Runic, Coptic, Servian, Russian, Sclavonian, Bulgarian, Armenian, &c., together with admirably engraved specimens; and also to an account, accompanied in like manner with examples, of those letters which are supposed to be derived from the Roman, such as those of the Lombards, in the three different forms of capitals, uncials and small letters, the Visigothic mode of writing, and the Saxon, which in the form of capitals, or of the "Roman" Saxon, or "set" Saxon, or the Saxon "running hand," or "elegant" Saxon letters, prevailed in England, from the fifth to the twelfth century.

A very lucid account is also given by the same author, of the mode of writing in the northern parts of Scotland, and in Ireland; of that called Norman, (which prevailed in England, from the reign of William the First, to the seventeenth century;) and of the kind of writing used also in France and Germany.

In the eighth and ninth centuries, according to Mr. Taylor, a kind of Cursive or Running-hand, which had been for a long time used by notaries and clerks, was adopted by the transcribers of books, who were, on this account, denominated tachygraphi,* or swift writers. Those who were copyists by profession, found so great an advantage in the use of this tachygraphic, cursive, or running-hand, that they resorted to very arbitrary methods of improving it, so that the movements of

* Ταχυγράφοι, called also ὀξυγράφοι and also, sometimes καλλιγράφοι, fair writers, though the latter, as the term imports, were those who made the excellence rather than the rapidity, of their transcription, a leading object. Besides these, there were χρυσογράφοι and κρυπτογράφοι, that is, those who wrote in gold letters and secret characters.

the pen might not be interrupted. The books of the tenth and subsequent centuries, abound, in consequence, with contractions, abbreviations and hieroglyphics. Words of the most frequent occurrence were indicated by single turns of the pen. Many of these were adopted by the early printers, and perpetuated in after times, as those, whose misfortune it has been to delve over the Greek testaments, printed so late as the close of the last century, may have sad occasion to remember. This mode of rapid transcription having been once adopted, led on to further degeneracy, in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

Almost all ancient manuscripts, yet further, contain decorations, and many are splendidly embellished with elaborate ornaments. These consist of flowery initials, grotesque cyphers, portraits, and sometimes even historical compositions. They are called *illuminations*,* and almost always exhibit some costume of the times, or some peculiarity, by which the age of the manuscript may be ascertained. A fund of antiquarian knowledge, relating to the middle ages, has been derived from this source.

To this account of the character, used in ancient times, may be added a passing reference to *Monograms*, *Sigla*, or literary signs, *Sigilla* and *Numerals*, all of which are found in manuscripts, and all, like those already alluded to, serve in various instances to determine the age of the document in which they are found. The first *Monograms*, or characters composed of the letters comprising the name of a person, were used by Roman pontiffs, and by persons in civil authority, on the continent of Europe, in very early times. They were rarely, if ever, employed in like manner, in England.

Sigla, or literary signs, or contractions, were verbal abbreviations of a more permanent and well authenticated character than those used by the tachygraphi just mentioned. These, as well as the *Sigilla*, or little figures or images, are found on coins, medals, rings, and on earthen or clay vessels,

* The term *illumination* is derived from the use of minium, for a red color, by the artists; who were hence called *miniatores* or *illuminatores*. There are some beautiful fac-similes of this kind of ornament in Mr. Astle's book, so often mentioned. And there is an example of an illuminated manuscript of the eighth century, preserved in the British museum, which employed the skill of no less than four theologues, each distinguished in his day. Eafid, bishop of Durham, wrote the text (the Four Gospels); Ethelwold, his successor, illuminated the volume; Bilfrid, an anchorite, covered it richly with gold, silver plates, and precious stones; and Aldred added glosses.

which were used for the preservation of wine* among the Romans. They are, in an especial manner, found among epitaphs and other monumental inscriptions, on sepulchral urns,† and on the lachrymatories which the ancients frequently deposited with the urns containing the ashes of the dead. The sigla were employed in epistolary correspondence, by the Greeks and Romans, both at the commencement and close of their letters, and also are found in judicial acts and writings. The Romans often employed the initials of words for the words themselves. These are by no means rare in the body of their epistles. Thus, e. g., in those of Cicero, we find specimens like this, S. T. E. T. L. N. V. E. E. Sua. C. V., that is, Si tu et Tullia Lux Nostra valetis, ego et suavissimus Cicero valemus. How exceedingly numerous these abbreviations, or sigla were, will appear, at a glance, by referring to Gerrard's account of them, which is appended to Bailey's Edition of Forcellini's (commonly called Facciolati's) Latin Lexicon.

To these abbreviations may be added another of a very peculiar kind, which was called *Monocondilion*. This appears to have been formed by a continuous stroke of the calamus, by which names, lines, and sometimes whole paragraphs, were represented.‡ Many of the Greek transcribers, according to Montfaucon, strove in the formation of these, to exercise (puzzle?) the reader as much as possible. And in this, as he observes also, they were eminently successful.

It is not necessary for any object we have now in view, to advert more particularly to the changes which have taken place in the practice of writing. They are referred to here, in this general way, for the purpose of showing that the subject has undergone a very thorough scrutiny, so that those, familiar with the process, find little difficulty of ascertaining the date of a

* "Nam præter sigilla obsignandis literis et epistolis, quæ vulgo annulis infigebantur, et magno numero hodieque visuntur in Museis variis; sigilla item innumera supersunt notandis. Dolia quippe vino aliisque liquoribus servandis, testacea sive figlina olim erant." Palæ. 168. Thus Martial describing the Villa of Faustinus, speaks, among other things, of the fragrant old wine there,

"Et multa fragrat testa senibus autumnis." Ep. Lib. III. 58.

† See on this subject, Sir Thomas Brown de Hydriotaphiâ, or Urn Burial. See also a very interesting description "De Chyndonachtis inscriptione," Lib. II. Cap. 7, of the Paleog.

‡ Est autem Monocondilion ductus calami, quo magnis, perplexis, continatis nec intermissis lineis, nomina, lineæ integræ, interdumque plures, unâ serie scribuntur: nos vocamus, *trait de plume*. Paleog. p. 349. Where also are to be found two examples, of these Monocondilia. To the uninitiated they much resemble a nest of worms.

manuscript from the letter and mode of writing employed. Indeed, it is said by those qualified to judge in this matter, that the architecture of different periods is not more characteristic of the age to which it belongs, than is the style of writing in manuscripts; nor is there less certainty in determining questions in the one, than in the other.

There is another circumstance attending the transmission of manuscripts, not yet referred to, by which the remains of ancient learning have been, in a very peculiar manner, preserved; and by which, also, their antiquity is clearly and decisively proved. We refer to the fact that manuscripts are discovered *beneath* another writing. These are called Palimpsesti,* or Palimpsesti, Codices rasi, Rescripti, Rescripts, or in plain English, re-written manuscripts. Before the invention of paper formed of cotton, and when that manufactured of the papyrus of the Nile became scarce, parchment, at all times a costly material, was greatly enhanced in price. At the same period, in consequence of the general decline of learning, the works of the classic writers of an earlier age, were held in little esteem. From these circumstances, the copyists, and particularly the monks, whose libraries often abounded with collections of parchment manuscripts, resorted to the obvious method of erasing, washing out, or in some way *discharging*, the original writing, in order to transcribe thereon in its place, the work of some preferred writer. The changes thus made, would be of course, in accordance with the prevailing taste of the age, or in subserviency to the peculiar objects the operator might have in view. In this way it was, that invaluable manuscripts of the Classical Writings of the best ages of Greece and Rome, and even the Scriptures themselves, have been erased, to make way for the original or borrowed legends of saints, and other absurdities, of the monks of the middle ages. Horace, Virgil, Quintilian, Fronto, Antoninus Pius, and such as these, were thus made to give place to some narrative of a patron saint, or dreamy meditation, or wire-drawn allegory, or consecrated romance, of some ignorant and benighted monk. And yet to this source, under the guidance of that Hand, which makes the folly, as well as the "wrath of man to praise Him," more perhaps than to any other, we owe some of the richest relics of an-

* Παλίμψιστος, a πάλιν rursum, et ἄλλο abstergo. The term was by no means uncommon among the Romans, though somewhat differently applied, as appears from Cic. Fam. Ep. 18.

tiquity, and with them, also, a decisive internal mark of their genuineness. The original writing, notwithstanding all the efforts of the second transcribers to erase it, still retained those traces of itself, which modern art, and eyes trained to the investigation, are enabled to restore. And these rescripts, it is evident, exhibit a double proof of the antiquity of the writing which first occupied the parchment. In the first place, the age of the more recent or monkish writing can be ascertained, (which, in some cases, can be referred to a period as early as the ninth century); and in the next place, it must follow, that the date of the previous writing is much earlier; for it is reasonable to suppose, that very old, and, in consequence, faded or bedimmed manuscripts, would be chosen for the purpose of erasure.

This method of restoring ancient manuscripts has been prosecuted with great, and with continually increasing, success, during the present century. A single individual has done more in thus recovering ancient writings, than any other person, perhaps it is not too much to say, than all other persons collectively, since the Revival of Letters in the fifteenth century; and by his own marvellous achievements in this respect, as well as by the impulse he has given to similar inquiries, it may be confidently hoped, that the most valuable of those remains of antiquity, which the Scholar and Theologian have long regretted, as irrecoverably lost, may be restored. The individual here referred to is Angelo Maio.* He was formerly keeper of the Ambrosian Library, at Milan, but was afterwards removed to the richer store-house of the Vatican Library, at Rome. He found in Pope Leo XII. a patron worthy of such an earnest and devoted laborer as himself. This Pontiff, in a largeness and munificence of spirit, very different from that which prevailed in the tenth century, freely lent his great influence and resources in restoring those very writings, which his predecessors, in the plenitude of their ignorance, strove most earnestly to efface and destroy. It is certainly to be regarded as a happy auspice of these later days, that we have lived in an age, when the priceless treasures of ancient books are issued

* In the twelfth volume of this Journal, there is some account of Maio, and also of the "Institutions of Gaius," and of the exceedingly curious and valuable fragments of Bishop Ulphilas's translation of the Scriptures. They are both Palimpsests.

It is a somewhat remarkable illustration of the rapidity with which he printed and issued these rescript books, that he has, more than once, been delayed by the scarceness of Greek Types in Rome.

from the Papal press, even more rapidly and regularly, than our forefathers used to receive the appalling anathemas of the Vatican.*

There is one other method, distinct from those above adverted to, by which ancient Manuscripts have been restored, which should not be passed by without some notice, though it is not necessary to give any circumstantial account of it. We refer to the discoveries which have been made, and are continually making, at Herculaneum and Pompeii. These, as is well known, were cities, originally founded by the Greeks, and were destroyed by a volcanic eruption of Mount Vesuvius, in the first century of the Christian era. They are doubtless rich in ancient manuscripts, and in remains of all those Instruments, which were used in writing, at the period of the catastrophe. Indeed, in the small and partial excavations, which were made at Herculaneum alone, more than twenty years since, when Mr. Eustace† was there, eighteen hundred manuscripts, as he tells us, had then been found, and, beyond all question, a vast number still remain buried in the ruins. Some of these have been unrolled and copied; and though they may be of little intrinsic value, yet being of an unquestioned antiquity, they afford a decisive proof, at least, of the forms of letters used at the period, and the methods and materials employed in writing. Here we may remark, again, that we owe the preservation of Ancient Records, to that very circumstance, which in all human estimation, most certainly threatened their

* Still these ancient Papal Bulls of these *Servi Servorum Dei*, as the Popes modestly called themselves, serve a good use at the present day, in ascertaining the character of the letters in use at the time they were made. Their genuineness is beyond dispute. The most ancient were written in the Roman Running hand; in the eighth century the Lombardic characters prevailed, and a mixture of these was continued to the fifteenth century. These Papal Edicts were called Bulls, as we may mention in passing, not from the tenor of the instrument itself, but from the circumstance of the *Seals* attached to them. These Seals derived their names from the Latin *Bullæ*, which were ornaments, commonly heart-shaped, worn around the neck by boys of the higher ranks among the Romans, until they were seventeen years old, when the custom was discontinued, and the ornaments, together with the pretexta, (in like manner as the dolls of the girls, at the age of fifteen,) were laid aside, and consecrated to the Lares. Persius (Sat. 5. v. 30.) alludes to this.

“Cum primum pavido custos mihi purpura cessit,
Bullaque succinctis laribus donata pependit.”

These Bulls or Seals of the Popes, which were any thing but playthings, were commonly made of lead, but sometimes, by way of distinction, they were of gold. If matters of grace and favor, they were attached by silken strings, if minatory, by hempen cords.

† Classical Tour. Vol. II. p. 23. Am. Edition.

destruction. It could hardly have been imagined, by those who witnessed the destruction of these devoted cities, that the streams of burning and boiling lava, in which they were engulfed, were designed, in Providence, as the safe depositories of some of the most curious, rare, and authentic, relics of antiquity.

To this account of the *Fabrics*, *Instruments*, *Inks*, and *Characters*, used in ancient writings, and other circumstances, by which their antiquity is ascertained, it is proper to add, before closing these remarks, some account of the *Copyists*, or persons by whom manuscripts were transcribed, and of the *Places* where the work was done. These are obviously important facts in reference to the question at issue, and our means of information in respect to them are very ample and satisfactory.

Copyists were employed in their appropriate labors, from the earliest times, until ancient writings were handed over, in the language of Mr. Taylor, to the "immortal custody of the press." They were influenced by different motives, and were taken from very different conditions in life. In all the principal cities of Greece and its Colonies, where literature was cultivated, there were great numbers* of *Professional Transcribers*, that is, those who gained their subsistence by copying books. Such laborers, it is rational to suppose, relied for patronage and employment on their fidelity and skill. Among the Romans, they were called *Librarii*.† They were generally of a servile condition, and made a necessary part of the household of every man of rank. Atticus trained up many of his *Servi* or slaves to this business; and when he dwelt at Athens, employed them in the transcription of Greek authors, for his pecuniary benefit. Cicero purchased many of these. *Notarii*, were originally *Stenographers* or short hand writers, employed as at the present day, to prepare accounts of trials, pleadings and harangues, from the lips of the speakers. There were also *Notarii Domestici*, Notaries, or Clerks, employed to keep accounts in the families of the nobles, and afterwards *Notarii Ecclesiastici* appointed by the Dignitaries of the Church to attest their acts.

* Montfaucon gives an alphabetical catalogue of the Greek Calligraphers, which occupies more than fifteen folio pages of his great work above referred to. pp. 94—108.

† Frequent allusions are made to these *Librarii*, by the Roman writers. Thus, in the Art of Poetry,

"Ut scriptor si peccat idem *librarius* usque."

But, subsequently, the copying of manuscripts was by no means confined to such as these, nor was it considered, exclusively, as a servile or merely professional employment. Persons of rank and leisure devoted themselves to it. Some created their own libraries by their own personal labors in this way, and when thus directed to purposes of emolument, they were richly repaid, by the great prices that books commanded before the invention of the art of printing. The practice of private copying, was greatly extended by the influence of Christianity. Motives of piety induced many to attend to it, as a means of disseminating the Christian records. The highest Officers of the Church, and even Princes, thought themselves well employed in efforts of this description. But from the third and fourth centuries downwards, learning having declined among the Romans, and Religious Houses being continually more and more multiplied, the practice of transcribing devolved, principally, upon the monks. This labor was peculiarly adapted to the character and condition of this class of religionists. The mental and bodily inertness which a monastic life naturally produced, when united, as it must have been, in individual cases, with some desire and capacity of effort, found, amidst an unvaried round of dead formalities in the labor of copying books, precisely "that field of lethargic assiduity," and busy idleness, and indolent excitement, and unhurrying activity, which it grievously felt the need of. In many monasteries, in consequence, this formed the principal employment of their inmates, and in none, or in a very few, was it wholly neglected. The great value which was placed upon manuscripts came, as has been said, in aid of the same result. Prices, truly immense for that period, were cheerfully given for them. Even so late as the beginning of the seventeenth century, in one recorded instance, the sum of 80,000 crowns, was the estimated value of the manuscripts belonging to a single Library.* In addition to all this, an opinion of merit, or of well-deserving, was attached to the labors of transcription. These are frequently subscribed to manuscripts of the middle ages, some notes like this. — "This book, copied by A. B. *for the benefit of his soul*, was finished in the year —. May the Lord think upon him."† From these causes,

* The famous Library of Heidelberg, presented by Maximilian, Duke of Bavaria, to Pope Gregory XV.

† In the Codex Rushworthianus, says Mr. Astle, now preserved in the Bodleian Library, at Oxford, the following note is appended. — "*Macregol*

together with that spirit of emulation and competition, from which, we may venture to suppose, even these Religious Houses were not wholly free, extreme care and pains-taking diligence were used in transcribing these ancient works. This is obvious, too, from the history of the times, as well as from inspection of the manuscripts themselves. We should in vain look for any writings executed since the invention of printing, of equal extent with those of the middle ages, that would bear any comparison with them, in point of elaborate embellishment, elegance, and scrupulous accuracy. It is no objection to this statement that the copyists were unlearned men. For, in the first place, this was not, as we have said, and shall further show, *universally* the fact; and, in the second place, if it were, it is not to be inferred, on this account, that they were inaccurate or unskilled copyists. On the contrary, their ignorance, so far as the mere act of transcription is concerned, might have befriended them; since here a "little knowledge" is emphatically a very "dangerous thing." This is well illustrated by Father Mabillon, in his very able defence of the fidelity and integrity of ancient manuscripts, who observes, that those compositors at the present day, are not the most correct who understand the language of the work in hand, but on the contrary, are commonly the most faulty. The reason is obvious enough. Those who are conscious of their own ignorance, will depend exclusively on the copy before their eyes, while those who know, or think they know, something of the language and subject matter in hand, but are, at the same time, ignorant of the extent of their ignorance, will be liable to be misled by the side-lights of their own fancied knowledge. And besides this, the transcriptions, in almost all instances, were numerous, and made independently of each other, and it is not to be supposed that they would all err in the same places, and in the same way.*

depinxit hoc Evangelium. Quicumque legerit et intellexerit istam narrationem, orat pro *Macregol* Scriptore."

Montfaucon (*Palæg. App.* p. 511,) transcribes a Greek note appended to a manuscript, and a Latin translation, which is as follows:—"Absolutus est hic Liber feriâ quintâ, horâ quartâ, deciâmâ quintâ die mensis Aprilis, Anno 6511 (Christi) 1003. Indictione prima * * * Exaratus manu Basillii Presbyteri et Arte Calligraphi. Quotquot autem legeritis in hoc Libro, *precamini pro me misero.*"

* "————— Ut Citharædus
Ridetur, chordâ qui semper oberrat eâdem."

In regard to the transcriptions of the Pentateuch, by the Jewish Transcribers, an excess of care was employed. It has been a constant rule with them, that, whatever manuscript is considered as corrupt, shall never be used, but be immediately destroyed; and that a book of the Mosaic Law, wanting but a single letter, or with one letter too much, or with an error in one single letter, written with any thing but pure ink, or written on parchment made with the hide of an unclean animal, or on parchment not purposely prepared for that purpose, or prepared by any but an Israelite, or on skins of parchment tied together by (Jewish) unclean strings, shall be holden to be corrupt, that no word shall be written without a line first drawn on the parchment; none written from memory, or without first being orally, and of set purpose, pronounced by the copyist; that before he writes the name of God, he must pause in deepest attention and reverence, and then wash his pen; that no letter shall be joined to another, and that, if the blank parchment cannot be seen all around each letter, the whole roll shall be deemed to be corrupt. There are settled regulations for the length and breadth of each sheet, and for the space to be left between each letter, each word, and each section; and when a copy has been completed it must be examined and corrected within thirty days after the work is finished, in order that it may be approved or rejected, for the use of the synagogue. All these rules are in full force to this day.*

Nor was the attention of this people confined to the transcription of their Sacred Books. They made also, as Mr. Butler observes, almost incredible efforts to preserve the *genuineness and integrity of the text*. This gave origin to their Massorah, which consists of critical remarks upon the verses, words, letters, and vowel points of the Hebrew Text, — the “most stupendous monument in the whole history of literature of minute and persevering labor.” The writers called Masorites, or Massorets, were some Jewish Literati, who lived after the beginning of the Christian era. With unexampled and almost superstitious care, they counted all the verses, words, and letters, of all the twenty-four books of the Old Testament, and of each of these twenty-four books, and of every section of each book, and of all the subdivisions of each sec-

* See But. *Horæ Bib.* Part I. Sec. IV. who quotes from Maimonides. Carpzov, *Crit. Sac.* V. T. pp. 371, 372. Horne *Int.* Vol. II. p. 36.

tion. They marked the verses where they thought something might have been forgotten ; the words they supposed to be changed ; the letters which they thought to be spurious ; the repetitions of the same verses ; the different reading of the words which were redundant or defective ; the number of times that the same word is found in the beginning, middle, or end of a verse ; the different significations of the same word ; the agreement or conjunction of one word with another ; the number of words that are printed above ; which letters are pronounced ; which are turned upside down ; which hang perpendicularly ; and took the number of each. It was they, in fine, who invented the vowel points and accents, and made very elaborate criticisms on every thing relating to the text, in its most minute particulars.*

It is true that most of the transcriptions which have reached our times, were made in what are called the "dark ages." But we should remember that this is a highly figurative expression, and conveys, unexplained, a very erroneous idea. Dark, indeed, these ages were, compared with former and with later periods in the history of Letters, yet they were never so dark as to be without many "lights of intellect," which, though scattered at different distances, and shining with different degrees of splendor, yet served greatly to relieve and diversify the general gloom. God never "leaves Himself without a witness" in the minds He has created. And those which He intends as Guides and Leaders in the great march of human improvement, are always found in advance of their age, and endowed with a spirit before which all external obstacles give place. Thus in the period which intervened between the reign of Justinian and the revival of Letters, as it is called, in the fifteenth century, — the period commonly called the "dark age," we find many scholars, "born for thought," who were true to their divine instinct and vocation. And in speaking of the general darkness of their era, we should not forget the obligation of gratitude we owe to them, for struggling against the all but overwhelming barbarism of the times, and for res-

* Thus they made the important discovery that the letter Nun in the word Gehon, is the very middle of the Pentateuch ; — that in the book of Genesis, there are twelve parascioths, or great sections ; forty-three called sedarim, or orders ; one thousand five hundred and thirty-four verses ; twenty thousand seven hundred and thirteen words ; seventy-eight thousand one hundred letters ; and that certain words are in the exact middle of the book, &c. Hor. Bib. Part I. Sec. V.

cuing and handing down to subsequent ages, those rich remains of sacred and profane learning, which, but for their agency, might have been forever lost. Of this description were many in the sixth century, and who are favorably recognised at this day. We need not mention many names. There were Procopius the historian, Hesychius the lexicographer, Priscian the grammarian, and Boethius the last pure Latin poet. The seventh century was the darkest of this period, but produced, nevertheless, some historical books of value. In the close of this, and in the first third of the subsequent century, the Venerable Bede lived, of whom it was proverbially said among the learned, "that though born in the farthest corner of the earth,"* and they might have added, though extremely credulous and fond of legendary tales, "he compassed the world with the line of his genius." Alcuin, of the eighth century, himself a pupil of Bede's, became in turn the beloved and honored instructor of Charlemagne, in rhetoric, logic, divinity and the mathematics; and did much, by his influence, to aid his enlightened monarch and pupil, in the restoration of letters. Maurus, also a disciple of Alcuin, Archbishop of Mentz in A. D. 847, was a renowned instructor in all the great departments of learning before he received the mitre. And, afterwards, in a delightful spirit of filial love for the place of his own early education, he richly endowed a monastery on the Rhine, and made provision therein, for the instruction of two hundred and seventy monks in all the learning then known. King Alfred, himself a man of extraordinary literary accomplishments, and the munificent patron of the University of Oxford; and Photius,† whose book *Myriobiblion* is yet consulted with great interest in ascertaining the genuineness of ancient records, both belonged to this period. From the great number of manuscripts which were executed in the tenth century, it is obvious that much attention was paid to letters, though the original authors of that period, whose books have come down to us, are few. It is not necessary to continue

* He passed his life in the Monastery of St. Peter and St. Paul, on the Tyne, in the Diocese of Durham.

† Photius, who was educated as a layman, was forcibly installed, by Michael III, as Patriarch of Constantinople, (A. D. 858); and that he might pass regularly through the preparatory steps, was made monk, reader, sub-deacon, deacon, priest and patriarch in six successive days.

this list of distinguished scholars, with any particularity, through the succeeding ages. There were Avicenna, Psellus, Lanfranc, Anselm, Suidas, in the eleventh century ; Anna Comnena, (with whose name is now associated the melancholy conclusion of the *Scottish Novels*, and whose *Alexiad* is pronounced, on high authority, to be “certainly, with all its defects, the first historical work that has as yet proceeded from a female pen,”) * Roger Bacon and several distinguished cotemporaries in England, the Tzetzes of Constantinople, and many others who lived in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries ; and in the fourteenth, which immediately preceded the bright era of literature, which has since dawned upon the world, we find the constellation of such names as those of Dantè, Petrarch, Boccacio, Chaucer and Gower. It is plain from this loose sketch of the learning of these times, that the knowledge of the great writers of antiquity was never wholly lost, and that it existed in parts of the world which were widely separated from each other. Indeed, the Monastic Institutions, which prevailed during this period, were, in some respects, eminently favorable to the cultivation of Letters. They were scattered through every civilized country ; and it being one of their standing rules, that their original number of members should be constantly preserved, they would necessarily draw within their own pale, all the talent that might exist in their vicinities. Such was the fact, for where any youth discovered an aptitude for learning, or gave any promise of success in its pursuit, he at once became an object of interest to the heads of the Religious Houses, who had always at heart their literary renown, almost as much as that derived from the possession of consecrated relics. There could, therefore, be scarcely any more eligible situation for a boy of this description, whether of “noble or ignoble blood,” than a place in one of them. Beside this, almost all these monastic establishments contained schools for the instruction of the young, and from these the superiors had the opportunity of selecting at will those, whom from any reason, they might deem adapted to further the interests of their houses. The consequence of this peculiar state of things was, that while all taste or care for learning disappeared from among the general mass of men, and while kings and nobles, and even the great body of the

* Mr. Lockhart’s “Advertisement” to *Robert of Paris*.

clergy were so grossly ignorant as scarcely to be able to write their own names; there were yet, in the seclusion of these then hallowed retreats, some persons whose literary tastes raised them above the mental level of their age, and who knew how to appreciate the stores of ancient literature which were there hoarded up.

Happily also, for the interests of learning, ancient manuscripts were preserved in Places so numerous, and so distant from each other, and invested, moreover, with such a character of sacredness, that they were preserved more safely, more free from change and destruction, than the mutability of human affairs ordinarily permits. The places where these manuscripts were made were exceedingly numerous. Alexandria, under the auspices of the Ptolemies,* Pergamus, under the encouragement of Attalus and his successors, and Constantinople, for a thousand years, were all famous for the production and preservation of manuscripts. The very numerous monasteries of the country immediately in the neighborhood of the Eastern Metropolis, and those of Asia Minor, and the Islands of the *Ægean* Sea, all contributed to increase the transcripts of ancient writings. Montfaucon gives a catalogue of no less than fifty of these religious houses, which existed in Calabria, and in the kingdom of Naples, which were employed in the same way.† But no spot has been so celebrated for the production of books as Mount Athos,‡ a promontory which stretches out from the coast of

* The Library of Alexandria, before it was burned by the Saracens, was computed to contain 700,000 volumes; — that of Pergamus, belonging to its King, is said to have consisted of 200,000 volumes.

† *Paleog.* Lib. I. cap. IX. This whole chapter, entitled "*De Regionibus et Locis ubi Græca Scriptio frequentata fuit*," is rich in information on this point.

‡ The whole of the seventh book of Montfaucon, [*Paleog.*] is devoted to a description of this celebrated spot, by John Comnenus. It is an exceedingly good study for those who think that the love of learning wholly died away at its decline in Greece and Rome. In connexion with this, too, may well be read the whole of the fourth book of Mabillon, entitled, "*Ubi agitur de Francorum Regum Palatiis, villisque regiis, in quibus diplomata condita sunt.*" Though Mabillon's learned work has especial reference to Charters and public Acts of sovereigns in relation to the Church of Rome, yet, all the numerous facts which he adduces, are obviously available in ascertaining the genuineness and integrity of *Latin* manuscripts generally. In the chapter above referred to, he gives a description in alphabetical order, of one hundred and sixty-three palaces and villas of the French Kings, in the middle ages, whence the Charters were issued.

Macedonia into the *Ægean* Sea. The sides of this "holy mount," as it was called, were almost literally crowded with monasteries, the principal employment of whose inmates was the transcription of ancient writings. And passing over to Western Europe, we find it was uniformly a leading object of the numerous monasteries existing there, and especially of those of the British Islands, in like manner, to preserve, multiply and perpetuate manuscripts. Every Church and Religious House of any description, contained its library, and a set of officers, whose express business it was to keep it in order. And attached to every Library, as a matter of course, was the *Scriptorium*, where the elder monks were employed in making copies of books. These places of safe-keeping, these Arks, if we may call them so, in which the remains of ancient learning were preserved, amidst that flood of barbarism which swept over the civilized world during the middle ages, were so exceedingly numerous, and widely separated from each other, that nothing of much importance, once discovered, could be subsequently lost, since whatever might be destroyed in one quarter, would be likely to be perpetuated in another.

The peculiar sacredness which was attached to these Religious Houses, moreover, rendered them places of greater security, than the palaces or fortresses of kings. These were often overthrown, and the whole surrounding country devastated, while the seclusions of the monks, being held in religious or superstitious veneration, were generally respected, even by the fiercest invaders. Or if these Religious Houses were occasionally exposed to the violence of hostile armies, they would be plundered of their chests, plate, jewels, and of almost every thing else, sooner than their manuscripts, since these, though intrinsically precious, were not, in periods of general ignorance, marketable articles. They were of inestimable value to a few who could read and understand them, but would be held in no especial estimation by a horde of Huns, and Goths, and Vandals.

It is a subject of congratulation to ourselves, and we doubt not the sympathy of our readers on the same point, that we have now arrived at a stage in this discussion, whence we may look back upon the ground we have gone over, and gather up the results of our investigations. And if the foregoing statements and course of argument be correct, the following facts have been established.

I. Even on the supposition, in the first place, that there were *not an ancient manuscript in existence*, and all the purported remains of ancient learning were comprised only in the printed editions in our hands, yet from *internal* evidence alone, it would be sufficiently evident that they, taken as a mass, contain within themselves the proof of the genuineness of each important separate part. These internal evidences are derived from various sources, the principal of which are the following.

1. There are certain internal marks, or characteristics of genuineness *derived from the subject matter* of the works, that could not well be forged.

2. The works in question contain *mutual quotations and references*, of a more or less direct or indirect character, by which a mass of evidence in favor of their genuineness is furnished, which is not open to the suspicion of forgery.

3. *Lists of authors*, in the order of time, who have treated a given subject, are furnished by writers, whose own antiquity is established by the same or other means of proof.

4. *Controversies* involving quotations and references of a particular kind, the history of which has long survived the occasions which called them forth, afford evidences of genuineness, which are above all suspicion of interpolation.

5. *Translations* of purported ancient works, and in more than one language, have come down to us, under circumstances which afford a decisive test of the genuineness of the original.

6. The same result may be ascertained, or at least approximated, by the *history of the language* in which any book is written, since a language necessarily takes its substance and hue from the general mind of the people using it at any given time, and of course, is in a state of continual change from age to age; and the eras of these changes are known.

From these internal sources alone, then, the genuineness of a book, alleged to be ancient, may be ascertained, even though there were not ancient manuscripts in existence.

II. But it is a well known fact that manuscripts, believed to be ancient, do exist in great numbers, and in a vast variety of forms. We may next then, examine these, and inquire whether they do not contain satisfactory proofs of their antiquity.

1. And here we find, first, the *history* of some manuscripts has been so accurately written and preserved, that we can no more doubt of their genuineness, than of a title deed to our estates.

2. They may contain an express *date*, whose genuineness is beyond question.

3. They may be accompanied with *marginal notes*, whose antiquity is established beyond question, by circumstances peculiar to themselves, thereby referring the text to which they belong to an age earlier than their own.

4. The antiquity of a manuscript may be very satisfactorily settled, from the *material* of which it is composed ; — whether for example, it be the *tanned Skins* of certain animals, or *Leaves of certain Plants and Trees*, or *Parchment* and the kindred substance *Vellum*, or the *Papyrus*, or *Cotton* or *Linen* ; since all of these substances were employed, in succession, for the purpose of writing, and the ages in which each was principally used, and when each gave place, in turn, to the other, are well known.

5. A similar kind of proof is derived from the *Inks* with which manuscripts were written, since the times, at which different substances used for this purpose succeeded each other, and the purposes for which certain particular kinds were used, are matters of history.

6. An exceedingly important mode of proof in reference to the same point of genuineness, is derived from the *Forms* of the *Letters* and the *Modes of Writing* which a manuscript exhibits. These were changed from age to age, and the history of the changes is very accurately ascertained. The circumstances also, whether a manuscript contains, or not, a *Division of Words, Accents, Spirits, Points*, or marks of *Punctuation*, are all of importance in this inquiry. And a similar remark is applicable to every kind of *Sigla* or *Literary Signs*, as they are called.

7. The fact that the traces of certain manuscripts are found beneath a more modern writing, in other words, that *Palimpsests* or *rescripts* exist, is exceedingly curious in itself, and affords a decisive proof of an antiquity at least considerably greater than that of the present form of the manuscript. And this latter is often clearly to be referred to a very remote period.

8. These processes of proof, are all confirmed, by the knowledge that may be possessed of the *Character* and *Condition* of

Copyists, by which their ability and faithfulness is rendered unquestionable; and by a knowledge also of the *Places* and *Circumstances* in which they were written and preserved.

III. And, finally, in addition to these internal evidences of the genuineness of ancient manuscripts, there is another of a distinct and entirely unquestionable character, derived from a source extrinsic to the manuscripts themselves. We refer to the fact that writings, in great numbers, are found among the ruins of the cities of Pompeii and Herculaneum, which are known to have been buried in lava, ever since the first century of the Christian era.

It is by these various means that the remains of ancient learning may be traced up to a period, when the original works were generally known, widely diffused and constantly quoted; and when, in consequence, the history of any work may almost as easily be established, as the history of any modern literary productions can be authenticated by us, at the present day. It is thus that we ascertain that the works now in our hands, are the same with those which bore the same names, and were universally received as the works of the alleged authors, at the time of their first appearance fifteen or twenty centuries ago. It is thus "we traverse the long era of general ignorance, that wide gulf which separates the intelligence and civilization of modern times, and we land, as it were, upon the native soil of those monuments of mind, and once more find ourselves surrounded by that abundance of evidence which belongs to an advanced state of knowledge."

Indeed, it is not, in strictness, necessary that we should trace up these reputed remains of ancient Literature, any further than into the depth of the darkness of the middle ages. And the reason is, it is plain from all we know of these times, and of the men of these times, that such works as those ascribed to the historians, poets and orators of Greece and Rome, must have belonged to a former age, and to a different condition of things. It is difficult to conceive of a greater incongruity in literary history, than that works like those of Thucydides and Plato, Cicero and Horace, could have been produced within the cells of monasteries, and still more amidst the ignorance, violence and slavish degradation of the mind, which prevailed without and around them. Ascribe what we may to the imaginative and creative power of human genius, *this* would be plainly, an achievement

far beyond its utmost reach. If they existed then even so early as the times of Photius, Alcuin or Bede, they *must* have existed long before.

But it may be here asked, are there not omissions, additions, alterations in the text of ancient authors, which have taken place either by design, or negligence in the course of repeated transcriptions? Undoubtedly there are, and in great numbers. These give origin to what are called "Various Readings." They are so numerous, in some cases, as to occupy in critical editions of the Classic Writers, a space five times as great as that filled by the text; and they have frequently given occasion to protracted and angry controversy. But it is here to be remarked that these Various Readings, are, in almost every instance, of a merely verbal kind, and such as deserve the attention of merely verbal critics. Those who are familiar with the German editions of the Greek and Roman writers will need no illustration of this fact. And of a hundred thousand Various Readings in the text of the New Testament, there are not, probably one hundred, which an English reader, who regarded only the true meaning of the passages where they occur, would deem of any importance. And of this hundred he would not find more than two or three, which could materially affect any question of fact, of faith, or of duty. And it should be further remembered, that the fewness of these Various Readings in any text, is no indication of its purity. So far from this, it rather implies either, first, that it has been derived from a very few copies, since each copy that is taken as a model must have, in the nature of the case, errors peculiar to itself; or else, second, that the copies which are extant are derived from some common manuscript, whose faults, of whatever kind, may have been sedulously handed down; so that the last copyist may have only been, like the heirs that Churchill speaks of in an hereditary line of family,

"A tenth transmitter of a foolish face."

But if, on the other hand, the *unimportant* discrepancies of manuscripts are numerous, it affords sufficient proof, at least, that they were written independently of one another, by persons disconnected in place, time, and circumstances. And in the latter case, we possess, obviously, the best means for restoring the text to the original purity, and the best security against willing or unconscious corruption. For though in this case,

no single copy, can be regarded as strictly correct, yet the true one may be supposed to exist among them, and the acknowledged canons of criticism may be rendered available in ascertaining what it is. On the whole, these Various Readings, taken as a mass, only furnish a more conclusive proof, than we could otherwise have had, of the scrupulous care and fidelity with which the business of copying manuscripts was conducted. There must have been a very high degree of professional integrity, and scrupulous care in the transcribers, in conveying the text of ancient authors, through a period, in some instances, of two thousand years, with alterations so very unimportant, as we find in point of fact to have taken place.*

It should be observed, also, in this connexion, however paradoxical the assertion may seem, that in regard to the knowledge of every thing pertaining to the genuineness of ancient manuscripts, as well as to the knowledge of antiquity generally, we are not receding from remote ages, but constantly advancing towards them. Since the fifteenth century, every successive year, instead of defacing and destroying the remains of ancient literature, has done something to restore and renovate them. This has been effected, partly by the rich and available discoveries which are constantly made of ancient manuscripts, and particularly of rescripts, or palimpsests; partly, by a more accurate knowledge of the Diplomatic Science, and a more efficient application of its principles to well ascertained facts; but, principally, to the invention of the Art of Printing. This not only multiplies the copies of books almost beyond the possibility of total destruction, but by giving to a whole edition an importance vastly greater than can be attached to any single copy, however accurate or beautiful it may be, it has enlisted the labors of learned men, in the preparation of books; and by giving to these labors of theirs a permanent form, has enabled each successive editor to avail himself of all the previous exertion, of all the rest. Such is the fact. In numberless instances, which

* See Taylor's *Trans. &c.* p. 23. This subject of "Various Readings," has called forth a great display of learning, and critical acumen. Mr. Horne, after discussing it, so far as the Scriptures are concerned, gives a catalogue of no less than fifteen authors who have systematically considered it. The English Reader is referred to a very satisfactory account, by J. D. Michaelis, Int. N. T. in the Translation by Bishop Marsh, (Vol. I. c. VI.) the basis of which was furnished by his father (C. B. Michaelis,) in the *Tractatio Critica de Variis Lectionibus N. T.* which, though written in his sixty-ninth year, is in the opinion of the son, the best of his productions.

we need not stop to specify the text of ancient writers, which, in the fifteenth century, was imperfect and corrupt, has been so far amended and restored in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, as to leave little, in regard to its integrity, to be desired. Indeed, by this wonderful invention, all that belongs to the literature of ancient, as well as of modern times, is exempted from that law of decay, which is written on all things else. The monuments of human genius, in every other form, are all crumbling away, and tending to dissolution. No human skill can preserve unimpaired the noble achievements of ancient genius in Architecture, in Statuary or in Painting. Time with "his effacing fingers," silently removes from all their beauty, and gently hands them over to mingle with the common mass of the elements. They will henceforth only live in the ever-living *words*, of those, whose admiration they may have kindled. But the inspirations of genius, once clothed in language, become through the instrumentality of the press, the inheritance of all subsequent times. They are then *ἔπεα πτερόεντα* indeed, they are winged and irrevocable, in a sense that Homer never dreamed of.

We have now done with the subject matter of this paper, but must ask to be indulged in two parting remarks.

The first is this. From the very rapid, but not we would hope, cursory view, we have now presented of this subject, we think it must be evident, that it is not a slight thing to weigh all the evidence by which the Genuineness of ancient writings is ascertained. And we would infer from this, that where there is reason to suppose, in any particular case, that such an examination has been accurately and conscientiously made, the result should not be rashly called in question; and in an especial manner, it should not be done by those, who have neither the means, nor the capacity, nor yet the inclination, to make the inquiry. All *à priori* arguments are out of place here. The question at issue, is a question of fact, and like all similar questions, is to be tested by the evidence appropriate to the subject. If any manuscript of alleged antiquity exists, it must have had a beginning. And whether this beginning were earlier or later, must be ascertained from the document itself, or from subsidiary evidence connected with it. And yet it is not an unheard of occurrence, to observe persons, who are disposed to call in question the credibility of a most important portion of ancient records, fastening upon some general notions of, what they are pleased to call

the impossibility of a faithful transmission of them, or upon some unimportant difficulties arising from various readings, or on some other trivial circumstance, and hence leaping to the conclusion, by a general inference, as unphilosophical as it is unjust, that nothing certain can be established respecting their genuineness. In this way cavils are often thrown out, particularly in reference to the early records of Christianity, which not only prove the extreme ignorance of the authors of them, but show clearly a yet more melancholy fact, — namely, that they are too ignorant to know how ignorant they are.

The other remark we would offer in conclusion, has an intimate connexion with this. It will have been perceived, that in this discussion, reference has been principally had to the *classical* remains of antiquity. This course has been advisedly pursued, because we have wished to state the General Principles on which investigations of this kind should be conducted. But here, be it distinctly noted, that these principles are as strictly applicable to *Sacred* as to classical or profane literature; and the advocate for the genuineness of the Christian Records, only asks that the same course of investigation should be pursued in the one case, as in the other. Indeed, it is only when the inquiry is thus carried on, that the immense preponderance of proof, in favor of the Sacred Writings, can be duly appreciated. And we should be unfaithful equally to our own convictions, principles, and feelings, not distinctly to state, as we do state, that, in point of fact, the Genuineness and Integrity of the Christian Scriptures, estimated on the broad principles here laid down, is substantiated by evidence, in a tenfold* proportion, more various, copious and conclusive, than that which can be adduced in support of any other ancient writings whatsoever. In simple justice then, the genuineness of these Records of our Faith cannot so much as be questioned, until the whole body of Classical Literature has been proved to be spurious.

* There have been nearly five hundred manuscripts of the New Testament, entire or in fragments, transmitted to us, which have been wholly, or in part, collated. But this forms only a small portion of these manuscripts, remaining in public or private libraries, which remain to be accurately examined. Horne, *Int. Vol. II. p. 52*. With this statement may be compared what Heyne, a very competent judge of the matter, says of the manuscripts of the presumed oldest Greek writer extant, namely, Homer. “Cum de iis, quibus editores uti sunt, codicibus nihil illi prodiderint, omninoque criticorum subtilitas hac in parte desideretur, cumque, quicquid diplomatici pronunciant, non minus lubricum sit omne hoc de constituendâ accurate codicum ætate judicium, acquiescendum est hac quâque in parte critices in æstimatione aliquâ probabili.” Vol. III. De Codicibus Homeri.